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VANCOUVER • TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2010 metronews.c

Sports
Canucks hold back Sabres
pg 13

Metro and Foursquare join forces

NETWORK Metro has formed a partnership with Foursquare, one of the world's fastest growing social networks.

Foursquare is a location-based social network that lets players use their mobile phone to "check in" to places in their city and announce their whereabouts to friends.

Metro will add its location-specific editorial content to the Foursquare service. People who choose to follow Metro on Foursquare will receive alerts when they're close to one of those locations.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

News on the Move

What's this barcode for?
Learn how to scan the barcode with the instructions at the top of pg 3

Canada pg 6

Fonyo loses Order of Canada

Vancouver Games

Countdown to 2010

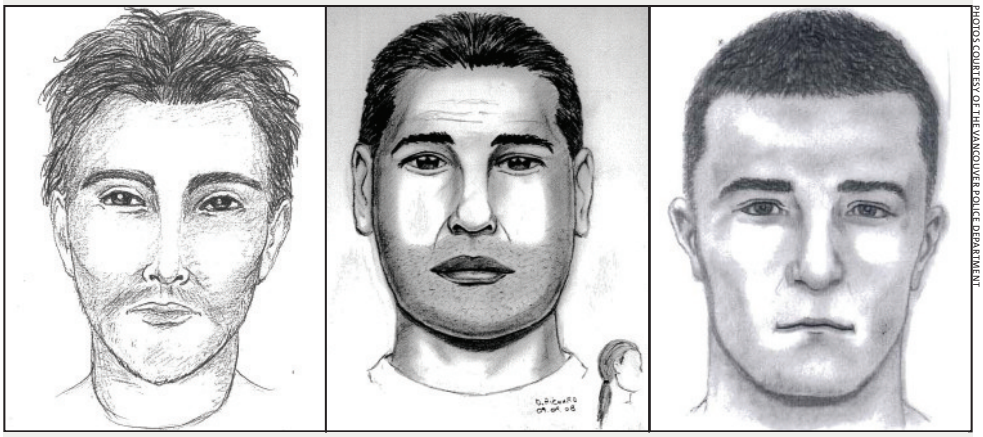
Follow Metro as we bring you daily coverage leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

• Today — Hockey injuries give Yzerman anxious moments, page 14

On the web

Visit metronews.ca for news updates

ALERT Suspected serial child predator



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

1995 2007 2009

Composite sketches of a man linked by DNA to the sexual assault of three girls in Vancouver, Delta and Surrey. The same man is also a suspect in five other cases. Police released the drawings yesterday in the hopes the man will turn himself in or that tips from the public will lead to an arrest. Story, page 3

U.S. Olympian's parents caught in Whistler scam

Bobsledder's family out $8K after online duplex rental fraud

GREG DOWNS
for Metro Vancouver

The parents of a champion U.S. Olympic bobsledder were scammed $8,000 while trying to rent a duplex in Whistler to watch their son compete.

New York resident Ben Mesler said that in addition to losing the money, he's struggling to find another place to stay for him and nine friends and relatives.

"We're in a real bind here," he said. "I'm upset, incredibly nervous about what's going to happen."

His son, Calgary-based Steve Mesler, is competing in his third Winter Olympics as a member of the United States four-men bobsled team that is ranked number 1 in the world.

Since February 2009 Ben and his wife, Lois, believed they had locked up the duplex in Whistler after posting online at rent2010.net that they were looking for accommodation for 10 people. They were contacted by a person using the name Jason Hartlen, who claimed to be a property owner in Whistler.

METRO WORLD
NewsExclusive

The Meslers were sent photos of the property via email and even chatted with the supposed landlord on the phone. However, after the final payment was transferred Hartlen became unreachable.

"We became really concerned at that point ... My daughter contacted a realtor and found out both units of the duplex had already been rented by (VANOC) from December right through March," Ben Mesler said.

Mark Zeleky, site administrator for Rent2010, said ads posted are not verified for legitimacy and users are on their own.

"Unfortunately, these episodes do take place," Zeleky said. "(About) 99.9 per cent of the time things work out as planned ... However, you do have to do your homework when working with an individual."

Whistler RCMP Const. Joseph MacDonald said the Mounties are aware of the issue.

City man sues VANOC, Cypress over accident

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

STATEMENT A Vancouver man is suing Olympic organizers and the operators of Cypress Mountain following a ski accident at the venue that will host snowboarding and freestyle skiing at the Winter Games.

David Leonard Avery has filed a statement of claim that says he was skiing in bounds on Cypress in February 2008 when he fell and hit his head on snow-grooming equipment owned by VANOC.

The statement says Avery suffered injuries to his head, face, neck and back, and has since experienced memory loss and depression.

The document claims VANOC and the operators of the ski area were negligent by placing the equipment in an unsafe area and failing to put up warning signs or fencing to avoid such an accident.

Avery, who works as a chauffeur, is seeking unspecified damages.

The statement of claim contains allegations that haven't been tested in court, and neither officials for VANOC nor the mountain have filed a statement of defence.

A spokesman for Cypress Mountain directed calls to VANOC, which declined to comment on the lawsuit.

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Local

Pavilion to welcome Sainte-Marie

Music icon Buffy Sainte-Marie, left, will kick off the nightly music performances at the 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion during the 2010 Games. Sainte-Marie will perform Feb. 12 from 9:30 to 11 p.m. following the opening ceremonies.

METRO VANCOUVER

Hockey House to celebrate Gretzky

OLYMPICS Hockey's greatest player will be feted during the Olympics at a massive pavilion on False Creek dedicated to hockey, Canada and beer.

Molson Canadian Hockey House, the large white tent at Concord Pacific Place, north of Science World, will hold "Wayne Gretzky Day" on Feb. 19.

The pavilion will be entirely Gretzky-themed, with video highlights of his career and memorabilia displayed throughout the venue. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

MURAL A nearly 4,000-square-foot mural was unveiled yesterday on the side of the Molson Brewery in Kitsilano. The large photo mosaic is made up from the photos of 13,000 people. The project raised more than $175,000 for the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic teams.

LIONS PRIDE The B.C. Lions unveiled an anti-gang program yesterday called Lions Pride. Part of the program includes a four-team flag football league for at-risk youth. Practices will be held throughout April, culminating in a tournament in May. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Stephen Harper pushes for accountability on Haiti relief funds at **metronews.ca/canada**

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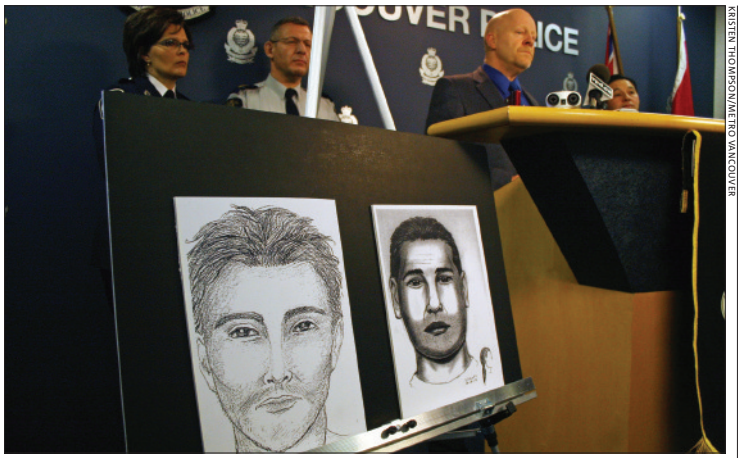

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Psychologist and former police officer Matt Logan, at the podium, shows composite sketches of a sexual predator at Vancouver police headquarters yesterday.

Child predator sought

Suspect's crimes may date back to '80s: Police

Police have issued composite sketches of a suspect wanted in three cases of sexual assault against children in Vancouver, Delta and Surrey in the hopes that someone may recognize him or he may turn himself in.

The suspect is wanted in connection with the 2009 sexual assault of a six-year-old girl in Surrey, and may be responsible for at least five other assaults dating back to the '80s, Vancouver police Insp. Bob Usui said.

"He approaches children as young as six years old on foot and asks for ... assistance in some way," he said.

"He grabs the most vulnerable in the group, then brandishes a knife to gain co-operation from the other children. He walks (his victim) a short distance to a secluded area ... and then sexually assaults them."

Usui said the suspect is calm and often apologetic with his victims, but threatens them with a knife if they do not co-operate.

Psychologist Dr. Matt Logan, a retired police officer, said the man has likely committed other assaults that have gone unreported.

"This is someone that a lot of children know personally," he said. "This could be your next-door neighbour."

In a personal appeal to the suspect, Logan said he knows the man doesn't want to hurt his victims and needs help.

"I have a caller named Andrew who is willing to take your call," he said. "You can reach him by calling 604-779-7581. Make this call, please." KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Call in tips

- Anyone with information is asked to call 778-331-4100 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

m.metronews.ca

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Linden among 4 inductees into B.C. Hockey Hall of Fame

HONOUR Beloved former Canucks captain Trevor Linden is being inducted into the B.C. Hockey Hall of Fame, officials announced at GM Place yesterday.

Linden, who played 19 seasons in the NHL, will be inducted with Trail native and Stanley Cup-winner Dallas Drake, Kelowna Rockets general manager Bruce Hamilton and Hockey Canada executive Frank Lento.

The men will be honoured at the 2010 induction banquet in Penticton on July 23.

Trevor Linden

Linden — who grew up in Medicine Hat, Alta. — debuted in the NHL with the Canucks at 18, was named captain at 21 and played 16 seasons for the team.

He also played for the Montreal Canadiens, Washington Capitals and New York Islanders. He retired in 2008. METRO VANCOUVER

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Snow dusts Cypress Mountain
Cypress Mountain has finally been blessed with a sprinkling of much-needed snow. The 2010 Olympic venue closed to the public last week because warm weather and rain melted the snow. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Activists drop suit against city over free speech

CENSORSHIP Activists concerned about free speech during the upcoming Olympics have dropped a lawsuit against the city for Games-related bylaws that they had felt were an offence to civil liberties.

In a release yesterday, activists Chris Shaw and Alissa Westergard-Thorpe said they withdrew their lawsuit against Vancouver because they were happy with amendments the city made to its Olympic bylaws in December.

Shaw called the outcome a significant victory for Charter rights.

According to the pair, the city had amended every section named in their lawsuit.

METRO VANCOUVER

Olympics don't cause housing booms, busts, UBC study shows

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

REAL-ESTATE Vancouver — like all North American Olympic host cities — likely won't experience a boom or bust in real-estate prices because of the Games, according to a UBC study released yesterday.

Researchers at the Sauder School of Business did, however, find that host cities in Australia, Canada and the United States gain construction jobs as they prepare for the world's biggest sporting event.

"We do not find support for the argument of host city backers that the Olympics delivers positive economic benefits, nor ... that there is some post-Olympic bust," said Tsur Somerville, lead author of the study. "While construction employment dramatically increases in the period prior to the Games, house prices are the same as they would be in the absence of the Games."

Jake Wetzel, a three-time Olympian and co-author of the study, said the societal impact of "valuing the Olympic ideals goes far beyond economics or politics."

Construction rise

- Pre-Games construction employment grew by 4.3 per cent in Vancouver, 1.7 per cent in Sydney, and 3.9 per cent in Atlanta and Salt Lake City.

News in brief

TORCH Former Baltimore Orioles pitcher Adam Loewen was named as an Olympic torchbearer yesterday. Loewen was the highest Canadian ever drafted into the major leagues.

DEATH A 72-year-old woman has died in hospital after being injured in a hit-and-run in Burnaby last week. Virginia Itubay was struck while crossing Willingdon Avenue at Kitchener Street on Thursday afternoon.

STABBING A 19-year-old man is in stable condition after being found with life-threatening stab wounds on the lawn of a Richmond home. The victim was found in the 9,000 block of No. 4 Road on Jan. 22. A suspect was arrested the following day.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Feeling constrained?

'Micro-lofts' will be city's smallest rentals

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

PHOTO SUBMITTED

An artists' rendering of a 270-square-foot "micro-loft" in the Burns Block heritage building in the Downtown Eastside.

Urinating in the shower may become socially acceptable in Vancouver thanks to a 30-unit development that will house the smallest rental suites in the city.

The "micro-lofts" include tiny "wet" bathrooms where the toilet and sink are in the same enclosure as the shower.

The units average a mere 270 square feet.

The development is a revamped 110-year-old Burns Block building across from Pigeon Park in the Downtown Eastside.

The suites will rent for about $750 when the $5-million project is completed in March 2011.

The open living spaces combine kitchens with living rooms and bedrooms. The bathrooms are glassed off, and literally just feet from the eating/sleeping area. Murphy Beds, which swing up into the wall, have small dinner tables attached to their undersides.

Jon Stovell, general manager of Reliance Properties, said micro apartments are common in parts of the U.S., Europe and Asia.

The tiny suites, he said, would appeal to students and "downtowners," young service-industry workers who enjoy the lifestyle and amenities of living downtown. The least expensive rental unit, $675, he added, is affordable for someone making $25,000 a year, or about $12 per hour.

The unveiling yesterday came as a Winnipeg-based public policy group listed Vancouver as the most unaffordable city in the world.

The average price to buy a home in the city is $540,900 and the median income is $58,200 a year.

Coun. Geoff Meggs said one of the major problems is a lack of market housing for working people.

More troubling, he added, is the fact that much of Vancouver's aging rental stock was built 40 years ago.

The Burns Block building made headlines in 2006 when the city condemned the building for fire-code violations and evicted 18 low-income tenants.

Carnegie Community Action Project spokeswoman Wendy Pedersen said the building is contributing to the "gentrification" of the neighbourhood, where the average income is about $12,000 a year.

STIG NIELSEN/FOR METRO VANCOUVER

Diomel Sarranquin takes a peek inside a cutout of a snowboarder on Granville Street. The area was closed to cars as aboriginal works of art and a forest of 2,000 hand-painted Chinese lanterns were installed in the lead-up to the Olympics.

Word on the street: What do you think of the artwork installed on Granville Street at Robson ahead of the Olympic Games?

Joel Thompson
23, Vancouver

A: "I think the art is good encouragement for the youth. Art mounts a capability that they can use in the future to divert away from the exterior (bad things) and build their character."

Leah Gobin
29, Burnaby

A: "I really like it. I saw it on Friday walking down here and I was really impressed. I lived here all my life and it's something new to the area. I think it's a really good opportunity for people who don't live in Canada to learn about different cultures."

Jennifer Shiu
32, Vancouver

A: "I like it because of the different colours. I like the theme because it relates to our city and I think tourists will like it because it's different than other places. I don't see other places having as strong an aboriginal influence as our city."

Get your passport if you want to go to Mexico
Canadians will need a passport to enter Mexico as of March 1, the country's tourism board advises. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Haiti cash must be well spent: PM

Montreal hosts rebuilding conference

Haiti Crisis

Canada and the United States affirmed yesterday that aid money flowing to Haiti should be carefully tracked so it's not squandered or stolen.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton emphasized the importance of accountability in the roadmap that will come from Montreal's international talks on Haiti's reconstruction.

"We bear a responsibility to our taxpayers to ensure that the money that our governments commit will be well spent, transparently, and with results on the ground for the Haitian people," Clinton told Harper after their meeting.

"That is also true for all of the private donations that will be joined with government funds."

Added Harper: "A big part of this is working through credible international organizations that are capable of co-ordinating donors, and also capable of tracking money."

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon hosted the one-day conference on rebuilding Haiti after a Jan. 12 earthquake flattened much of the country. He also attended the Clinton meeting.

PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton chat prior to a conference on Haiti yesterday in Montreal.

International banking institutions, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, were monitoring the talks involving more than a dozen foreign ministers to ensure accountability of future financial promises to the quake-stricken country.

Non-governmental organizations that were invited to one session of yesterday's talks said the bankers were tightlipped about their specific plans.

Harper told the gathering that it would likely take a decade to rebuild Haiti. He stressed that the money pledged by the international community should be spent properly.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that 10 years of hard work, at least, awaits the world in Haiti," Harper said after participants observed a minute's silence for quake victims.

"We must ensure that every resource committed — every relief worker, every vehicle, every dollar — is used as effectively as possible," Harper said. "We need to focus on effectiveness. The Haitian people deserve that. Our own taxpayers expect it."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

SABLE ISLAND The federal and Nova Scotia governments are moving to provide permanent protection for Sable Island, an ecologically sensitive spit of land about 290 kilometres southeast of Halifax. Studies are underway to determine just what form that should take, federal Environment Minister Jim Prentice announced yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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As a sense of normalcy sets on Kandahar, some are fearful more Canadian troops will mean more violence. Scan this code for the story.

Inuit kids face more health issues: Study

ARCTIC Inuit infants die at well over three times the rate of other Canadian babies, according to a massive new study published yesterday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

And as if to underscore the tough situation facing aboriginal children in Canada's North, a second study in the same journal found that 70 per cent of Inuit preschoolers live in homes where there isn't always enough food.

"Inuit children in Nunavut are faced with health challenges that are more severe than those in Southern Canada due to the socio-economic conditions facing the entire territory," said Dr. Isaac Sobol, the territory's chief public officer of health.

To study the Inuit infant mortality rate, University of Montreal researcher Dr. Zhong-Cheng Luo looked at all four million births in Canada between 1990 and 2000. He then broke out those that occurred in 53 predominantly Inuit communities in the Arctic.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Missing Inuit hunter found in good health

An Inuit hunter who spent three nights stranded on an ice floe drifting in the Northwest Passage was rescued yesterday afternoon. "He was cold and tired but otherwise in good health," said Pierre Bolduc of the Canadian Search and Rescue Centre. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Order of Canada dumps Fox finisher

Multiple convictions lead to ousting Fonyo

He finished Terry Fox's run across Canada and raised millions for cancer research, but in the two decades since then his life has been marked by run-ins with the law.

Now Rideau Hall has revoked Steve Fonyo Jr.'s membership in the Order of Canada, one of the country's highest civilian honours.

Fonyo, an amputee like Fox, was awarded the order in 1985 after raising more than $13 million. It was recognition of his 14-month, 8,000-kilometre trek on an artificial leg along the Trans-Canada Highway, completing the epic journey Fox had planned from St. John's, N.L., to Victoria.

Owing to a slew of criminal convictions, however, the 44-year-old was stripped of the award on Dec. 10. A notice of the revocation appeared in the Canada Gazette on Jan. 23.

Fonyo, then of Vernon, B.C., was named The Canadian Press Newsmaker of the Year in 1985, but his stretch of inspirational stories eventually took a negative turn.

The one-time hero, who lost his leg to bone cancer at age 12, battled cocaine addiction and depression.

He pleaded guilty in 1996 in Edmonton to more than a dozen charges ranging from assault with a weapon to fraud and theft.

He was handed a 18-month conditional sentence and two years on probation, and told to pay about $11,000 to two supermarkets where he bounced dozens of cheques.

The Order of Canada can be terminated when a recipient has been convicted of a criminal offence, the person's conduct departs from recognized standards of public behaviour or they have been sanctioned by a professional organization. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ontario **Minister gets a pie in the face**

RON ALBERTSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS/HAMILTON SPECTATOR

Federal Fisheries and Oceans Minister Gail Shea reacts after getting a pie in the face in Burlington, Ont., yesterday. Shea was delivering a speech at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters. Police have charged a woman with assault. The animal-rights group PETA says it is responsible for the incident.

Young at risk for heart disease: Report

HEALTH Canada faces a "perfect storm" of heart disease, with younger adults at increased risk of earlier onset of heart disease and the huge baby boom generation approaching their senior years, the Heart and Stroke Foundation warned yesterday.

In its annual report card on the heart health of Canadians, the organization said the looming phenomenon will place an unprecedented burden on Canada's cardiovascular care system.

It's a situation governments can no longer afford to ignore, said Stephen Samis, the foundation's director of health policy.

The organization said inactivity and rising obesity rates are afflicting young adults aged 20 to 39, a group the foundation said it now considers at risk for heart disease.

"The face of heart disease is changing.," said Toronto cardiologist Dr. Beth Abramson. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Terror case underway

CHICAGO A Pakistani-born Canadian, accused of leading a double life as an international terrorist, pleaded not guilty yesterday to playing a role in the 2008 terrorist attacks in the Indian city of Mumbai.

Tahawwur Hussain Rana, 49, also pleaded not guilty to charges that he helped to lay the groundwork for a terrorist attack on a Danish newspaper.

Rana appeared before Magistrate Judge Arlander Keys in the orange jumpsuit of a U.S. federal prisoner and wearing leg irons that rattled when they caught momentarily in the wheel of a courtroom chair. If convicted, he could get life in prison.

166 people were killed in the Mumbai attacks. THE CANADIAN PRESS

N.B. **Mountie comes home**

RON WARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS/THE TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Lisa Gallagher, wife of the late Sgt. Mark Gallagher, accepts her husband's RCMP Stetson from RCMP Deputy Commissioner, Atlantic Region Steve Graham during a ramp ceremony at the Transport Canada hanger yesterday in Dieppe, N.B.

Feds retaliating against whistleblower, lawyer says

COLVIN A lawyer for the whistle-blower in the Afghan detainee issue says Richard Colvin has a "reasonable belief" that the Tory government is retaliating against him for his damaging torture testimony late last year.

Colvin's Toronto lawyer, Owen Rees, makes the accusation in a letter sent to the Military Police Complaints Commission yesterday.

Rees says the government has essentially stopped paying Colvin's legal bills since November, when the diplomat told a Commons committee that several senior government officials were aware that Canadian Forces in Afghanistan were handing over detainees to be tortured by Afghan authorities in 2006.

Richard Colvin

"Coupled with the government's public attacks on Mr. Colvin and his testimony before the special committee on the Canadian mission in Afghanistan … our client is left with the reasonable belief that the denial of legal indemnification is a reprisal for his participation before the committee and the commission," the letter says.

The latest Colvin development comes with Parliament suspended until March, leaving opposition MPs without their usual forum to tackle the issue. The opposition has accused Prime Minister Stephen Harper of proroguing Parliament to stifle the whole Afghan detainee issue.

Colvin is entitled to legal representations as a federal civil servant who was summoned to testify about his work in Afghanistan. The government agreed to provide some funding for independent counsel after his original lawyer argued in the months prior to his testimony that the Justice Department could not represent parties on both sides of the dispute, given the risk of a conflict of interest.

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon's office did not respond to a request for comment. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grits, NDP seek end to proroguing

POLITICS Liberals and New Democrats are joining forces in a bid to ensure Prime Minister Stephen Harper never again shuts down Parliament to avoid a confidence vote or silence opposition questions on burning issues.

The Bloc Quebecois is supportive in principle, but it's warning that efforts to rein in the prime minister's power to prorogue Parliament might not be constitutional. It's reserving judgment until it sees the fine print of the proposals.

Harper isn't waiting to see if the three opposition parties muster sufficient numbers to limit his power. His office is already raising the spectre of an opposition "coalition" conspiring once again to "usurp" power. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pope calls for Christian unity

Pope Benedict XVI says the world is marked by religious indifference and a "growing aversion" to Christianity. The pontiff also is urging Christians to overcome their differences through dialogue so that they can unite their efforts to influence debates in society on ethical issues such as abortion and euthanasia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Netanyahu's wife sues newspaper

The wife of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sued an Israeli newspaper yesterday for libel and defamation of character, claiming the Maariv daily is "maliciously trying to humiliate" her. Sara Netanyahu, left, is claiming damages of $270,000 US and demanding an apology and a correction for a story that stated she fired a 70-year-old gardener at the prime minister's official residence. The gardener lost a son in one of Israel's wars. The suit comes a week after a former housekeeper sued Netanyahu for alleged verbal abuse and other mistreatment. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

French panel report on veils due

FRANCE A French parliamentary panel will recommend a ban on face-covering Muslim veils in public areas from hospitals to schools, but will stop short of pressing for the garb to be outlawed in the street, the panel's president says. The panel's report due today culminates a six-month inquiry into the wearing of all-encompassing veils that began after President Nicolas Sarkozy said in June that they are "not welcome" on French territory. The panel's mission, and a separate national identity debate on immigration, already have left some of France's Muslims feeling discriminated against, said Mohammed Moussaoui, who heads an umbrella group of various Muslim organizations. France has the largest Muslim population in western Europe.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ScanLife

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger tells Californians they have a right to be angry. Scan this code for the story.

Where do they go now?

Government urges people to leave capital as 700,000 lack shelter

Haiti Crisis

The collapse of much of Haiti's capital has a large part of the nation struggling just to find a place to sleep.

As many as one million people — one person in nine across the entire country — need to find new shelter, the United Nations estimates, and there are too few tents, let alone safe buildings, to put them in.

That leaves about 700,000 other people living on the streets around Port-au-Prince under whatever they can salvage. In the case of Jean Anthony's family, that's a blue plastic tarpaulin for a ceiling and a faded pink sheet with a floral print border for two walls.

"I'm not sure what you'd call it, but it's much more than terrible," said Anthony, the 60-year-old owner of a collapsed restaurant. Thousands of people were camped around him yesterday across from the collapsed National Palace, amid piles of trash and the stench of human waste.

ARIANA CUBILLOS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two men fight over a bag of rice during food distribution in Port-au-Prince yesterday.

"We live like dogs," said Espiegle Amilcar, an unemployed 34-year-old who has been staying under a sheet of plastic nearby. Aid organizations say they are collecting tents, but few so far are in evidence. And the International Organization for Migration, an intergovernmental agency, says it could take experts weeks to search out suitable sites for enough tent cities to hold earthquake refugees.

Haiti's government wants many of the homeless to leave the capital city of two million people, to look for better shelter with relatives or others elsewhere.

An estimated 50,000 to 100,000 people have returned to the region around the coastal city of Gonaives in northern Haiti, a city abandoned by many after two floods in six years.

"Living in Port-au-Prince is a problem. Going to Gonaives is another problem," said Maire Delphin Alceus. "Everywhere you go is a problem. If I could, I would have left this country and been somewhere else by now. But I have no way to do that." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Urgent meeting

- The UN says its top human rights body will hold an urgent meeting tomorrow on Haiti. The special session of the Human Rights Council was requested by Brazil.

U.S. imposing 'information imperialism'

BEIJING China rebuked the U.S. yesterday, denying involvement in Internet attacks and defending online restrictions after Washington urged Beijing to investigate an attack against Google. The web giant announced on Jan. 12 that it would pull out of China unless the government relaxes rules on censorship. The ultimatum came after Google said email accounts of human rights activists had been hacked. Since then, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has criticized censorship of cyberspace. The Foreign Ministry said her remarks damaged relations, while a newspaper said the U.S. was imposing "information imperialism" on China.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Octomom **Octoplets turn one**

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Rihanna's New Man 'HE'S VIOLENT!' – explosive court papers

STAR MAGAZINE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

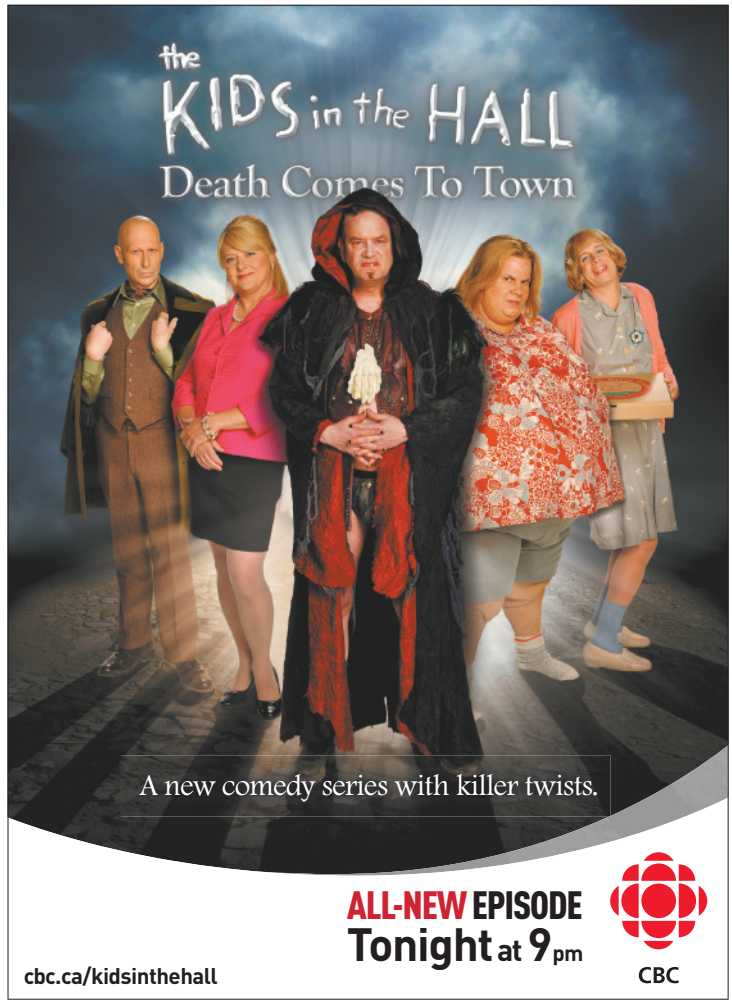
In this cover image released by Star magazine, the Feb. 1 issue features "Octomom" Nadya Suleman. As the octuplets celebrate their first birthday, the single, unemployed woman is raising 14 children while milking the celebrity media for attention and money that she plans to use to bring up her brood.

News in brief

IRAQ Suicide bombers struck in quick succession yesterday at three Baghdad hotels favoured by Western journalists in well-planned assaults that killed at least 37 people and wounded more than 100. The blasts were launched over a span of 15 minutes, shortly before Iraq announced it had hanged Saddam Hussein's notorious henchman "Chemical Ali" and gave rise to speculation about possible links to the attacks.

MISSOURI Police say a man accused of stealing a ring coughed up the evidence while officers were questioning him. Pictures of the two-carat diamond ring worth about $20,000 US were sent to jewelers after it was reported stolen Thursday. The owner of Newton's Jewelry recognized the ring when a man came in a few hours after the theft and wanted to sell it. L.T. Newton stalled them and called police. Police say the man swallowed the ring when officers arrived. While being questioned, he began to cough uncontrollably and eventually coughed it up.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



2,000 tourists stranded
Heavy rains and mudslides in Peru have blocked the train route to the ancient Inca citadel of Machu Picchu, stranding some 2,000 tourists. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Leftist conference begins in Brazil

Thousands of leftists converged yesterday in southern Brazil to spend five days railing against unfettered capitalism at the World Social Forum, the annual countercultural gathering held to protest the bankers and world leaders who will attend the World Economic Forum at a Swiss ski resort.

Organizers expect as many as 15,000 activists from around the world to swarm into Porto Alegre, raising communist flags and shouting socialist slogans as they decry corporate greed as the main reason the planet plummeted into an economic slump.

In contrast, the economic forum that starts tomorrow in Davos, Switzerland, is expected to see fewer leaders than in years past, and U.S. President Barack Obama's plan to clamp down on the size and activity of banks is sure to be on the minds of many of the rich and powerful heading to Switzerland.

Lingering fallout from the financial crisis is proof that the world economy must be retooled to benefit people, not big companies, said Francisco Whitaker, a Roman Catholic activist and co-founder of the social forum who was exiled from Brazil during its 1964-1995 dictatorship.

"The fact that Davos is being held like it's a wake gives the impression that capitalism is on the downfall and hitting its limits," Whitaker said.

Activists are increasingly energized by the prospect of persuading governments to tackle corporate excess and spread more wealth to the needy, he said.

"We're in the midst of true enthusiasm," Whitaker said. "We may not change the world completely and all at once, but the change now can come from the bottom and spread. It's surging and getting toward a critical mass." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Persecuted Canadians flee to U.K.?

LONDON British government figures show that a number of Canadians and Americans have applied for asylum in the United Kingdom in the past few years on the grounds that they were persecuted in their own countries.

Home Office figures show 15 Canadians and 45 Americans tried to obtain asylum in Britain between 2004 to 2008.

The government says all of the applicants were refused.

The Home Office was unable to give information explaining why, saying only that all asylum seekers must prove they face persecution at home and that authorities there cannot address it properly.

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News in brief

COLORADO A white supremacist group will be heading out on the roads to pickup litter. The chapter of the National Socialist Movement is participating in an Adopt-A-Highway program in Colorado. The group calls itself America's Nazi Party and it will be responsible for picking up trash along a 1.6-kilometre stretch of highway north of Denver. A sign is already up in the area with the group's name on it. State highway officials say they allowed the highway adoption because their lawyers said they could be in violation of the group's free speech if they issued a denial.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Venezuela **Fighting censorship**

LEONARDO RAMIREZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman argues with riot police during a protest in Caracas yesterday. Police fired tear gas and plastic bullets to disperse students protesting after President Hugo Chavez's government forced a critical TV channel off cable television.

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Comment

Democracy strikes back

NationalReport

Considering the calamity in Haiti has overwhelmed all other news, as it should have, the number of Canadians who showed up Sunday for nationwide protests against the suspension of Parliament was impressive.

The people are speaking — in protests and in opinions polls. The story is not going away and the ramifications are many.

Firstly, it's a sign — a damn good sign — that democracy is alive in this country. We hear so often that Canadians don't care, that they're apathetic, that what goes on in Parliament is off their radar. But it sure hasn't looked that way.

Secondly, it's a development that knocks the prime minister from his arrogant perch, that hallowed ground wherein he seems to think he can get away with almost anything. The people have told him they're not going to put up with it. Here's betting you won't see Stephen Harper suspending Parliament for reasons of crass political gain ever again.

Thirdly, the story has revived Liberal party fortunes. Prior to the prorogation, the slumping Michael Ignatieff had almost been written off as another dead Grit walking. But as is so often the case in politics, it's not what you do that counts, it's what your opponent does. Sometimes, out of the blue — deus ex machina — a big break comes your way. Iggy finally got one.

"We can get more work done, Conservatives say, when Parliament isn't in session ... When the opposition isn't around, it does make life a lot easier. It's tantamount to running a dictatorship."

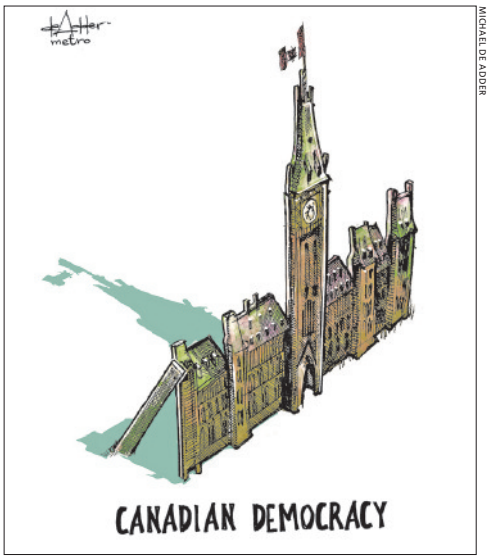
Fourthly, the Governor General will now take note of how serious the shutting down of Parliament is. In future it will likely take more than just a phone call from the PM. This was the third time, not just twice as many think, that Harper has shut down Parliament in the last year and a half. The first time was when he turned his back on his pledge of fixed election dates to force the 2008 election. Yes, there was an exception to the fixed-date law. An election could be called earlier if the government lost the confidence of the House. But in that instance the government had not lost the House's confidence.

As for the latest prorogation, Canadians aren't buying the Conservatives' excuses. One of them is that other governments prorogued as well. But no other government has done it three times in 18 months for cynical political reasons.

Then there's the latest rationale, a most revealing one. We can get more work done, Conservatives say, when Parliament isn't in session. That, in fact, is true enough. When the opposition isn't around, it does make life a lot easier. It's tantamount to running a dictatorship.

That's why Canadians are reacting the way they are. They're saying, "Sorry Mr. Harper, you can't have one."

Lawrence Martin is a journalist and author of 10 books who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Vancouver's spirit will pull through for Winter Games

Re: Time to raise your spirit (Jan. 22)

To compare Calgary's spirit to Vancouver's supposed lack of spirit in regard to the Olympic Games is totally unrealistic and unfair. I had the good fortune to be living in Calgary at the time that city held the Olympics. Yes, there is no doubt about it, the spirit was fantastic.

This Olympics is operating at a different time, under different circumstances — economic woes, traffic woes, security stress and more.

The citizens who make Vancouver a wonderful place to live will pull through the best way possible.

FRAN DIETZ, VANCOUVER

Please see metronews.ca for Charles Davies' In Business column – Not easy to hack away at federal deficit

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Firm retrofits containers for Haiti

A small Ontario firm is using retrofitted shipping containers to provide some of the essential equipment aid organizations need when working in areas as devastated as the parts of Haiti damaged in last week's earthquake. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Sydney **Zoo view**

JEREMY PIPER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Google Australia previews its new Street View Trike at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, yesterday. The zoo will be the first location mapped using the new Google vehicle.

EI exhaustion possible: Report

Unemployed could see benefits run out with no job prospects

Hundreds of thousands of unemployed Canadians may exhaust their benefits before finding a new job despite improvements to the employment insurance system, according to an analysis by a senior Canadian Labour Congress official.

The analysis by CLC chief economist Andrew Jackson found that 500,000 Canadians who initiated EI claims in 2009 could well see their benefits run out with no job prospects in site.

The report noted that there were 120,000 more unemployed Canadians unable to collect benefits as of October 2009 compared with before the recession hit in October 2008.

"We can expect that the total number of new regular claims in 2009 will (have) hit about two million," Jackson said in his report, written for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

"If the exhaustion rate were to remain the same as in 2006-07, we could eventually see some 500,000-plus exhausted claims in late 2009 and into 2010," he wrote.

The report gave credit to the government for extending benefits by an additional five weeks. But it said the changes were inadequate to handle the additional demands on the system caused by the recession, where at the peak over 400,000 jobs were lost. Even with improvements to the employment insurance system, only about half of those unemployed nationally were collecting benefits as of last October. In Ontario, one of the hardest-hit provinces, that number was as low as 41 per cent, Jackson said.

He noted that the average time it took to find a job stood at 17 weeks as of last September, compared with 13.6 weeks in September 2008.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rising tide

- The number of Canadians who were collecting benefits rose from about 500,000 to over 809,000 between October 2008 and October 2009, but the number who were jobless and not collecting benefits also rose, Jackson said. Many of those were women, his report added.

Ticket merger between firms hit with concessions

MUSIC BIZ The U.S. Department of Justice has imposed major concessions upon Live Nation and Ticketmaster in approving the companies' merger.

Shares in both companies jumped in trading yesterday after reports surfaced earlier the merger would be approved. Included in the settlement is a requirement Ticketmaster Entertainment Inc. license its ticketing software to competitor AEG and sell its subsidiary Paciolan to Comcast Spectacor. The merged entity would be under a 10-year court order prohibiting it from retaliating against venues that choose to sign contracts with competitors.

Assistant Attorney General Christine Varney announced the conditions yesterday.

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Wireless firm to cut 1,500 jobs

LAYOFFS Wireless equipment maker LM Ericsson AB yesterday said it will cut another 1,500 jobs this year after reporting a 92 per cent drop in fourth-quarter profit as mobile operators slashed spending.

Ericsson said net profit in the October-December period was 314 million kronor ($45.9 million Cdn), down from 3.9 billion kronor in the same three months 2008, while full year profits dropped 67 per cent to 3.7 billion kronor ($570.5 million).

Quarterly sales fell by 13 per cent to 58.3 billion kronor ($8.5 billion), from 67 billion a year earlier. Sales for 2009 fell by one per cent to 206.5 billion kronor ($30.2 billion) from 208.9 billion kronor ($30.5 billion). The company, based in Stockholm, raised the target for its savings program. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Middle class under assault: Obama

POLITICS U.S. President Barack Obama is offering help for people struggling to care for their families, appealing to a middle-class he says has been "under assault for a long time."

In a partial preview of a state of the union address that aims to answer voter angst about the economy and reconnect with the public, Obama outlined yesterday the series of proposals from the White House. The product of a middle class task force headed by Vice-President Joe Biden, the proposals will also be included in Obama's budget request due to be submitted to Congress next week.

Among the initiatives: a doubling of the child care tax credit for families earning under $85,000 US; a $1.6-billion increase in federal funding for child-care programs and a program to cap student loan payments at 10 per cent of income above "a basic living allowance."

His initiatives also include expanding tax credits to match retirement savings and increasing aid for families taking care of elderly relatives. That program would also require employers to provide the option of a workplace-based retirement savings plan.

Obama is also mindful of the loss of a traditionally Democratic Senate seat in Massachusetts to Republican Scott Brown.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ScanLife

Could Apple's rumoured tablet duplicate iPod's success and transform the ebook market? Scan this code for the story.

Albany, N.Y. **Drill baby drill**

MIKE GROLL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bill Hall of Windsor, N.Y., left, and Chris Gross of Hancock, N.Y., hold signs in Albany, N.Y., yesterday, supporting natural gas drilling in New York state. Landowners say they should be able to sell drilling rights in the western Catskills and Southern Tier and that lease terms and proposed Department of Environmental Conservation rules will protect them.

GM's Whitachre confirms GM will repay government loans by June
General Motors Co. chairman and CEO Ed Whitacre Jr., who said yesterday he'll stay on as head of the automaker for the time being, has reaffirmed that GM will repay in full the loans it got from the U.S. and Canadian governments by June. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Apple's best quarter yet

Apple Inc. rocketed to its most profitable quarter yet over the holidays, as huge sales of the iPhone — and a new way the company accounts for the device — led to a nearly 50 per cent jump in net income.

The company offered no clues about what it plans to unveil Wednesday in San Francisco, although analysts expect the new product to be a tablet-style computer. CEO Steve Jobs indicated that investors should expect a significant event. "The new products we are planning to release this year are very strong, starting this week with a major new product that we're really excited about," he said in a statement.

Apple also offered a profit and revenue forecast above forecasts.

The iPhone's rollout in several major new markets, including China and South Korea, helped Apple double sales of the phone. Apple also got a boost because now it puts iPhone revenue and profit on its books when the gadget is sold, rather than deferring those results over the presumed life of the device.

Apple said yesterday it earned $3.4 billion US, or $3.67 per share, in the latest quarter, which ended Dec. 26. In the same period of 2008 it earned $2.3 billion, or $2.50 per share, when it was still deferring iPhone revenue.

Revenue was $15.7 billion, a 32 per cent jump from $11.9 billion in the same period last year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Luxury rep doesn't hurt sales

- Apple's report reflected the company's ability to lure shoppers without deep cuts to its premium prices.

Apple's reputation as a luxury brand hasn't dented its ability to put up better numbers, even as many computer buyers gravitate toward cheaper options.

Hudson's Bay, B.C. tribes reach deal on sweaters

RETAIL A deal has been reached between the Hudson's Bay Company and a group of Vancouver Island aboriginal knitters to sell genuine, hand-knit sweaters at the 2010 Olympics.

Hudson's Bay spokeswoman Shari Burnett says there is a deal with the Cowichan Tribes of the Duncan area to sell their hand-knit sweaters at the company's flagship Olympic store beginning Feb. 1.

The Cowichan Tribes expressed disappointment last year when the Bay introduced its official line of Olympic clothing, which included a sweater similar in look and style to the Cowichan sweater. The Cowichan said they were counting on selling their sweaters at the Olympics to provide economic relief for band members and cultural exposure for the tribes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business in brief

PENSION Michael Sabia, the president and CEO of the Caisse de depot et placement du Quebec — Quebec's giant pension fund manager — is promising a return to "plain old common sense" when it comes to investing money used to pay benefits to millions of Quebecers.

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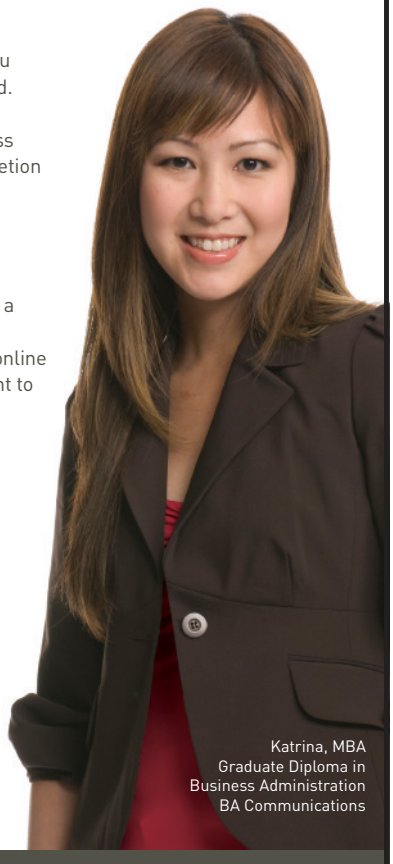

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Your Money

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Top three RRSP questions

Why should I consider investing in an RRSP? RRSPs let you save by earning income on a tax-deferred basis until you retire.

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This is triple witching time — money wise, at any rate. Holiday bills are still not paid, RRSP contributions still not made and tax season looms. This is when I get a rising crescendo of pleas for help. Most of them along the lines of neighbours Julia and Jason: "We just can't find any more money. What are we going to do?"

Answer: The Audit Squad — actually, just moi. I offered to do what I call an excess asset inventory and sift through their possessions to discover superfluous, sellable items. The only rules were: Don't hide anything and no whining when we're finished.

I started in the garage, so overstuffed they couldn't fit the car in as well. I found a working freezer and a dorm-sized fridge. Sold! $150. A weight set. Sold! $35. Beer and wine bottles. Returned! $22. A '50s chrome dinette set. Sold! $100. A perfectly good 27" TV. Sold! $50. A box of 1960s mint condition vinyl albums. Sold! $225.

Getting the picture? They had almost $1,500 of malingering assets in the garage, all purchased with credit cards, which have big balances. In effect they are still paying 19 per cent interest, or almost $25 a month for this stuff.

I was licking my lips as I headed into the house. Hello Kegerator! There was much resistance from Jason about the pool table (unracked for three years) and an exercise bike sporting a cobweb hairdo.

Julia enjoyed Jason's dismay until I turned to her bureau. She had gobs of no longer worn costume jewelry plus a drawer filled with gold items either broken or missing a mate. The gold went for $400 at a gold party.

After the audit, Julia and Jason sold almost $3,000 worth of stuff, which made a big dent in their credit card debt and freed up some money for RRSP contributions. The bonus? They can now get their car in the garage.

Alison's Money Rule

- At this time of year, when money is scarce, do an audit of your underused and unwanted stuff and start selling.

Alison Griffiths is a financial journalist, author and host of Maxed Out on the W Network. Write to her at alison@alisongriffiths.ca.

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Cormier suspended for rest of season
The Quebec Major Junior Hockey League has suspended Patrice Cormier for the rest of the season and playoffs following his hit on Mikael Tam. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sports

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Buffalo Sabres goaltender Ryan Miller stops a shot from Vancouver Canucks forward Ryan Kesler last night at GM Place.

Canucks trump Sabres

NHL RESULTS

Sabres 2 Canucks 3

VS

Brad Lukowich scored his first goal in 111 games yesterday and the Vancouver Canucks extended their winning streak to a season-high five games by defeating the Buffalo Sabres 3-2.

Lukowich jumped into the play to take a back pass through the legs of Daniel Sedin, and the veteran defenceman beat Buffalo netminder Ryan Miller with a quick shot that snapped a 2-2 tie.

The goal was the first for the Cranbrook, B.C., native since Nov. 5, 2007, when he scored against Florida while playing for the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Lukowich was in the minors earlier this month with the Austin-based Texas Stars but was called up from the AHL club when Vancouver's blueline became depleted by injury.

Henrik Sedin and Mikael Samuelsson also scored for the Canucks.

Adam Mair and Thomas Vanek replied for Buffalo.

Vancouver improved to 32-18-2 and tied the Colorado Avalanche for first in the Northwest Division and third in the Western Conference.

The Sabres, who lead Ottawa by seven points atop the Northeast Division, lost their fourth straight and fifth in six games to slip to 30-14-7.

Buffalo has lost six straight at GM Place, with their last victory coming in February 1999.

Vancouver, thin on the blue-line for the second straight game, beat an Eastern Conference club for the ninth time in 10 starts.

The Canucks were without the shutdown defence pairing of Sami Salo (groin) and Willie Mitchell (concussion) along with Kevin Bieksa, who is rehabbing lacerated ankle tendons.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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ScanLife
Streaking Sens can thank hot goalie and healthy lineup for six-game winning streak. Scan this code for the story.

Sports in brief

NBA Washington Wizards guard Javaris Crittenton pleaded guilty to a misdemeanour gun charge yesterday, explaining he had a pistol because he feared teammate Gilbert Arenas would shoot him or blow up his car after the two argued over a card game.

SOCCER Salvador Cabanas, the top player on Paraguay's World Cup team, was shot in the head before dawn yesterday in the bathroom of a bar in a well-off neighbourhood in Mexico City. The 29-year-old striker is said to be in stable condition.

NBA The New Orleans Hornets traded starting shooting guard Devin Brown to the Chicago Bulls for backup seven-foot centre Aaron Gray. Brown, 31, has played in 39 games for New Orleans this season, starting all but two. He is averaging 9.7 points per game.

WORLD CUP A deal for Europe to host the 2018 World Cup is being negotiated, FIFA president Sepp Blatter said. England, Russia and joint bids from Spain and Portugal, and Belgium Netherlands are currently competing to host the 2018 or 2022 World Cup.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
VANCOUVER 3 Buffalo 2
Pittsburgh 4 N.Y. Rangers 2
St. Louis 2 Calgary 0

TODAY'S GAMES
Los Angeles at Toronto
Washington at N.Y. Islanders
Anaheim at Atlanta
Nashville at Columbus
New Jersey at Ottawa
Montreal at Florida
Phoenix at Detroit
Chicago at Edmonton

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Atlanta 102 Houston 95
Boston 95 L.A. Clippers 89
Chicago 98 San Antonio 93
Cleveland 92 Miami 91
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Memphis 99 Orlando 94
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Utah 124 Phoenix 115
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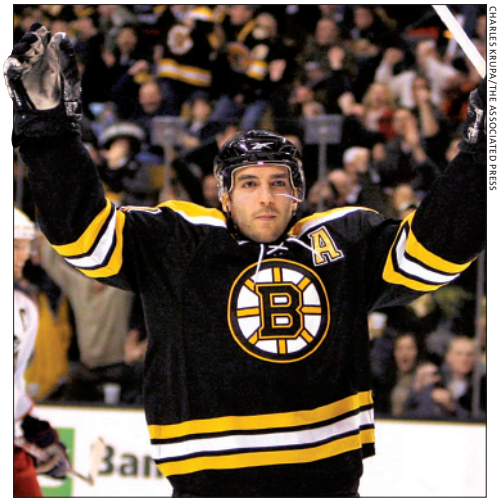
Timmer fails to qualify for Olympics

Olympic champion speedskater Marianne Timmer failed to qualify for the Vancouver Games yesterday and won't get a chance to defend her 1,000-metre long-track title next month. In a three-way skate-off, the 35-year-old Dutchwoman could only manage third place. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vancouver Games

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Yzerman keeps eye on injuries



CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bruins centre Patrice Bergeron, who was named to Canada's Olympic squad, recently returned from a broken right thumb.

These are the truly anxious moments for Steve Yzerman.

Since he unveiled Team Canada's lineup at the end of December, the executive director has seen Marc-Andre Fleury, Brenden Morrow, Dan Boyle, Patrice Bergeron and Ryan Getzlaf miss games because of injury.

Even though all 23 of his original picks are still expected to be in Vancouver next month, Yzerman knows that could change on any given night. He's found it a tad difficult to relax while waiting for the Games to start, especially given that something bad could happen to one of his players in the meantime.

"Just sitting between announcing the team and (the time leading) up to the Olympics is the most difficult part," Yzerman told The Canadian Press in a recent interview. "There's not a whole lot you can do at this point. You're sitting wondering if you've got injured guys, how are they going to be? I'm just watching guys play."

Fast approaching

- The NHL shuts its doors for the Olympic break Feb. 14, leaving teams with between eight and 11 games to play before Team Canada faces Norway in Vancouver Feb. 16.

While Bergeron (broken right thumb) and Getzlaf (leg) have both returned to action, the other three players were on the sidelines at the end of last week.

Injuries could play a big role in these Olympics because teams won't be carrying a taxi squad like they did four years ago in Turin. Each country will register its final 23-man roster Feb. 15 — the night before the tournament begins — and no one else will be eligible to suit up at the event.

As a result, teams will be reluctant to bring any players with nagging problems that might be easily aggravated in Vancouver. Yzerman and his Olympic management group have been sure to monitor each situation as closely as possible.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Olympics in brief

FLAG-BEARER The athlete who will lead the Canadian team into B.C. Place during the opening ceremony at the Olympics will be revealed Friday. The Canadian Olympic Committee will announce the flag-bearer for the Vancouver Games in Richmond. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Snowboard team mixes youth and experience

TEAM CANADA Four years ago, a 13-year-old Palmer Taylor was on the edge of her sofa watching the world's best snowboarders attack the Olympic halfpipe on TV.

During next month's Vancouver Winter Games, she's going to be much closer to the action as Canada's youngest snowboarder.

Palmer Taylor

Taylor, now 17, has joined a team of riders that Canadians will be counting on to produce Olympic hardware.

The 18 riders — 10 men and eight women from the sport's three disciplines — were formally introduced yesterday in Quebec City.

Inside the halfpipe, Taylor will join Olympic veterans Sarah Conrad of Dartmouth and Mercedes Nicoll of Whistler, B.C.

Taylor, a member of the national development team, can't wait to challenge her heroes on the ice walls of the superpipe.

"My dad, he had his arm around me and I was like, 'Dad, I want to do that,'" recalled Taylor, who watched the 2006 Turin Games at her family's home in Collingwood, Ont.

"And what do you know? Here I am now."

The Canadian snowboard team will bring a mix of experience and youth to the Olympics. It will also carry some lofty medal expectations.

World No. 1 Maëlle Ricker of West Vancouver, and second-ranked Dominique Maltais of Petite-Rivière-St-Francois, Que., will lead the way in snowboard cross, a bruising, high-speed event.

Maltais won Canada's only snowboard medal in Turin, where she captured the bronze.

Members of the men's boardercross team could also climb the podium in Vancouver.

The deep squad includes No. 4-ranked Robert Fagan of Squamish, B.C., Mike Robertson of Canmore, Alta., Francois Boivin of Jonquiere, Que., and 35-year-old snowboard-cross warrior Drew Neilson of North Vancouver.

Jasey-Jay Anderson of Mont-Trembant, Que., the defending world champion in parallel giant slalom, returns to the Games for the fourth time.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

'There has to be that kind of disappointment'

FREESTYLE It has been said Canada has the depth in men's hockey to field two teams at next month's Olympics.

The same could be argued when it comes to the country's 18-member Olympic freestyle ski team, which was officially announced yesterday with several world-class athletes notably absent.

"As much as it's difficult, that's what makes this great, that it's not easy," said Canadian Freestyle Ski Association CEO Peter Judge of making the Olympic team.

"If it were easy, then everybody would be doing it. There has to be that kind of disappointment to make it great, and that's what makes this such an honour."

With the addition of ski cross to the Olympics this year, the already fierce competition for spots on the Canadian freestyle ski team became all the more crowded.

GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian freestyle skier Jennifer Heil smiles during the announcement of the Canadian freestyle skiing team yesterday.

Of the 18 athletes who will represent Canada in Vancouver, seven will compete in ski cross, seven in moguls and four in aerials.

One athlete from each discipline — Ashleigh McIvor in ski cross, Jennifer Heil in moguls and Steve Omischl in aerials — was pre-selected prior to this season for the Games. That left 15 spots up for grabs using a complex scoring system to classify athletes from three very different sports onto one master list.

In ski cross, Canada has the second, third and fourth-ranked women in the world in Julia Murray of Whistler, B.C., Kelsey Serwa of Kelowna, B.C., and McIvor, also of Whistler. On the men's side, Chris Del Bosco of Vail, Colo., is ranked third in the world and Calgary's Stanley Hayer is the defending X-Games champion.

Filling out the team are Montreal's Chloe Dufour-Lapointe in women's moguls, while Maxime Gingras of St-Hippolyte, Que., Vincent Marquis of Quebec City and Pierre-Alexandre Rousseau of Drummondville, Que., will compete in men's moguls. In men's aerials, there's Kyle Nissen and Warren Shouldice, both of Calgary. In ski cross, Winnipeg's Danielle Poleschuk made the women's team, while and Dave Duncan, of London, Ont., will compete for the men.

Among those left off the team are ski crosser Davey Barr of Whistler, who finished third at the 2009 world championships, and men's aerialist Ryan Blais of Grande Prairie, Alta., who came up just short for the second Olympics in a row.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Money-saving tip
Limit your ATM withdrawals and bank fees. Plan your spending and always use cash. You may want to consider leaving your debit card at home, too. **NEWS CANADA**

Financial Planning

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Easy to control your future

Obstacles such as job loss can be overcome with plan

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Financial planning is crucial to meeting many of your life's goals, but many people are afraid of making that first commitment.

Jeff Young, senior manager of financial planning support at RBC, says the first step to taking control of your financial future is to find an expert you trust who understands you.

"I strongly encourage people to work with an adviser because there are intricacies in financial planning that most individuals are not ready to handle alone. An adviser can really help you get a vision of what your goals are," Young said.

Decide on what your short-, mid- and long-term goals are, and then be realistic about whether you'll be able to reach them. If some of your goals are too vague or too lofty (at least for now), it might be time to tackle them in order of importance rather than trying to conquer them all at once.

"Put all your goals together and ask yourself, 'Can I achieve all these goals?' If you can't, it's time to prioritize," Young said.

With people living longer, inflation continually rising, taxes slowly creeping up and economies swerving up and down, Ida Templeton, a director with Canadian financial services firm Investors Group, says some measure of financial planning is crucial for everyone.

"The reason financial planning is so critical is that we all are living under the same financial circumstances. A financial plan allows you to be in a position where you can control the things you actually have control over," she said.

Having a financial plan can help you to understand what your short-, mid- and long-term goals are.

While certain things in life can be predicted, some of the most challenging situations can happen suddenly, such as a job loss, a death in the family or an economic downturn, and good planning can help you weather those challenges.

"A really critical component of any good financial plan is planning for the obstacles. Stay close to the fundamentals that build up a very strong foundation in your financial pyramid," Templeton said.

The concept of good and bad debt is important to remember, Templeton says, because the difference has enormous implications for your financial health. Good debt, such as an RRSP loan, can help you meet financial goals in the right situation, whereas bad debt, such as credit card interest, can hold you back from those goals.

"No matter how much money you have, you can make positive changes for yourself."
Ida Templeton

Templeton says that no matter how long you've waited to set out on a financial plan, it's never too late to start.

"I think people underestimate the power and opportunity they have, and a lot of times it just means asking the right questions. Be conscious and realize that no matter how much money you have, you can make positive changes for yourself," Templeton said.

Reshape your finances in about eight hours

By now, you may find that your fervent vows to lose weight and get to the gym regularly have fallen by the wayside. But take heart, there's still plenty of time, and plenty of ways to take advantage of the new year to get your finances on track.

Just don't expect it to happen all at once, experts say.

"The very first thing you do as you make your resolutions is say, 'My money management is going to be an evolution,'" said Patricia Lovett-Reid, senior vice-president at TD Waterhouse Canada Inc.

"Commit to saying your financial life matters and you're going to make it a priority. Do one thing differently each month — you will be in a very different financial situation one year from now."

There's an analogy she likes to use: Think of yourself as the hub in the centre of a bicycle wheel. Each spoke on the wheel represents an element of your financial life, such as investments, estate planning, insurance, debt, or credit.

"As you address each spoke, you start to gain momentum and you start to gain traction," Lovett-Reid said. "What happens is even in periods of volatility in the market — and there will be volatility in the market — you feel a sense of control because you're dealing with each element. And so you gain momentum. You get a better trajectory."

This doesn't involve a huge time commitment, said financial planning expert Kurt Rosentreter, financial adviser with Manulife Securities Inc.

Allocate eight hours to your personal finances in 2010, he said. That could be four hours for your investments, maybe two two-hour long meetings with your adviser, or sitting down and reviewing your investments yourself. The other two or three hours could be basic education about mortgages or children's savings, with another hour or so looking at insurance or wills.

"People say they don't have the time, but they'll watch eight hours of TV in two nights or spend that time on the Internet," Rosentreter said.

"Get some accountability over that and you won't be sitting around in five years wondering, 'Where did all my money go?' or 'Why did I never make money on my investments?'"

If you're still wondering where to begin, start by writing down your short-, medium- and long-term goals.

Once a year, measure progress toward them and build a plan around that.

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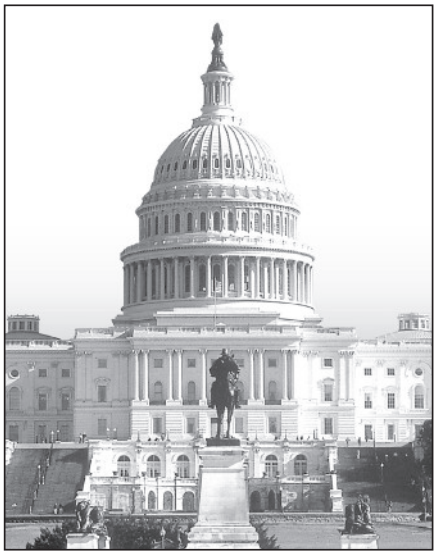

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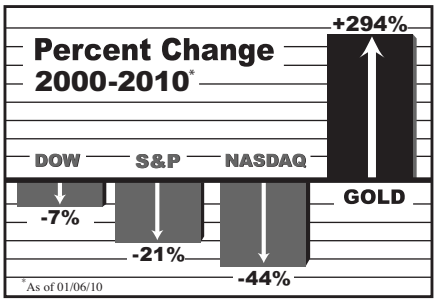

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Money-saving tip
Put your financial plan in place and then meet with a financial adviser for added guidance. NEWS CANADA

Financial Planning

Advisers can pay off

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

A good investment adviser is like a good doctor. She'll take a broad, long-term look at your financial situation and offer a plan to keep you fiscally healthy, even if the marketplace gets sick. Experts say investing without advice can be like diagnosing yourself online: Risky.

An adviser will take a long-term look at your financial situation.

Terry McCullough spent 10 years working as a financial/investment adviser (the titles are often used interchangeably) and now teaches investment courses at Ontario's George Brown College.

"Financial advisers do really pay (off) for people — if they do their homework. It's a marriage," he says. "Advisers come in all shapes, sizes and flavours. Even a great adviser is not always good for a specific client."

McCullough says advisers bring balance. Do you want to buy a house in two years? Have kids in four years?

"They can say, here's what we can look for in the way of a return, here's what we expect to see to happen to you now, and here's what your needs will be in different time frames," he says.

They can provide a disinterested take on the markets and your money, balancing risk with reward.

"In the last year, if somebody had had a balanced portfolio and equity markets corrected drastically, but bond markets made a bit of money ... we could adjust your 50-50 portfolio at that point. Sell some of the bonds, buy some of the equities at a lower price," he explains.

Scott McCartney, senior investment adviser with Canaccord Wealth Management, says there's lots of free advice, but you'll get what you pay for. People don't have the time to deal minutely with their money, so they hire him. His clients call him with tips they've heard at the pub and it's his job to check them out in the real world.

"Most of what I do is I'm simply a guide," he says from his Edmonton office. "As a guide, I can bring to the table institutional-type investments that people can't get on their own."

Online investing can make it too easy to make a bad decision with your finances, he says. If all you have to do is point and click to change your RRSP from a value strategy to a speculative strategy, it's "good to have somebody on the other end of the phone to say you might want to consider this or that — two heads are better than one."

Sticking to a budget 'like a diet'

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

When it comes to financial planning, there's no time like the present to get the ball rolling.

"It doesn't matter if you're in your 20s, 40s or 80s, as long as you start," said Laura Rossiter, a consultant with Investors Group Toronto Midtown.

But the earlier you start, the stronger your plan will be and the better your saving habits will become over time, she added.

There are a number of ways to develop a financial plan, says Tamara Smith, vice-president of marketing and consumer affairs for the Financial Planning Standards Council.

Start by setting life goals, tracking how much you spend over the course of a month, setting a monthly budget and sticking to it, and trying to save 10 per cent of your take-home salary, she said.

"It's like a diet, you've got to start the first day and then you go the second day and the third day and you just keep at it," Smith said.

"It doesn't matter if you're in your 20s, 40s or 80s, as long as you start."
Laura Rossiter

The next step is to make an appointment with a financial adviser.

Most major banks provide financial planning as a complimentary service for customers, but the service may be attached to products such as RRSPs, a mortgage, or a savings account.

Other groups, such as Moneyadviser.ca, offer financial advice without the attachment to products, but charge a fee for the service.

Whatever route you choose, it's important to talk to a professional, says Kevin Macleod, certified financial planner and vice-president of Moneyadviser.ca in Calgary.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation that gets poured down our throats about money," he said.

A financial planner helps you sort through the maze of information out there and figures out what works best for you, he said.

Finally, when looking for a financial adviser, make sure they know what they're talking about.

"Most provinces do not have any regulations around who can call themselves financial planners, so it's really a buyer beware market," Smith said.

The Certified Financial Planning credential is the largest, identifiable, credentialled body in the industry, she said. There are 17,500 CFP professionals in Canada and the Financial Planning Standards Council website, fpsc.ca, provides a databank of certified professionals across the country.

"It's one of the best ways to find someone who is truly competent and ethical," Smith said.

"Someday we're going to retire the way we want. But when is someday?"

RRSP DEADLINE MARCH 1, 2010

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Financial Planning

Always set money aside: Experts

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Cash flow got you in a cash-crunch? Maybe it's time to start thinking about — and sticking to — a budget.

Kira Vermond, money columnist at Chatelaine magazine and author of the book Earn, Spend, Save, says credit cards and easy loans have created an impulse-buy system where it's too easy to go off the rails budget-wise because you don't feel like you have to save for big things.

"The one thing we've forgotten to do as a society is how to save for big-ticket items. We really have to take a page from our grandparents — they knew how to save for things. You have to set goals and work towards them," she said.

Vermond says the key to keeping a budget healthy is to always set away money, even in small amounts, for expensive things like trips while also setting money aside for crucial things like utilities and living costs. Before buying anything you might regret, Vermond recommends first visualizing its inevitable closet-stuffing fate.

"I like to picture things collecting dust in my house. There's so much stuff that we buy that we don't actually use much, and all of it will end up in a landfill eventually anyway," Vermond said.

Glenn Lightfoot, a financial planning consultant with RBC, suggests thinking of your spending as going into different buckets, then tracking how much gets thrown into each bucket regularly.

"Separate your spending into 'Need to Have,' 'Nice to Have,' and 'Long-Term Goals.' You need to understand where your money is going," Lightfoot said.

Learning how to deny yourself things, no matter how small, is a crucial skill, and Lightfoot suggests you approach your budget from a business perspective.

"It's the little things that add up during the week —the coffees, the lunches — that kill people. If you run your family budget the way a business runs its budget, you'll be able to think more ruthlessly," Lightfoot said.

Credit cards and easy loans have created a system where it's easy to go of the rails, budget-wise.

Kira Vermond, author of Earn, Spend, Save, says people have forgotten how to save for big-ticket items.

Budgeting tips

Kira Vermond offers a few tips for making sure your budget stays on track:

- Figure out how much you're spending by tracking where your cash goes for two or three weeks.
- Take a look and decide if what you're spending your money on makes sense. Are you buying useless or unnecessary stuff too often?
- Force yourself to spend less: If you go to the grocery store, take only $100 in cash with you so you can't spend a penny more.
- Avoid impulse buys: Wait 24 hours before buying something and always imagine what it would look like collecting dust, since that's what most items we buy end up doing.

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Thin but not necessarily sexy

Slender. Toned. Tanned. Women — and men — with such bodies are generally seen as highly desirable and sexy. Which is why it may come as a surprise that thinness may deplete your sex drive — and your fertility. **NEWS CANADA**

Health & Beauty

Gym zone at home

Choosing a room to function as a home gym or personal workout space is just as important as finding the right equipment. The key is to make the space inviting.

"Paint's inexpensive, but it can really make a difference," says Ruth Tara, a New York-based home gym designer and former trainer. "Pick a colour you love that isn't white or off-white. Add good lighting so you can see what you're doing."

Put the gym in an area that will keep you active, engaged and coming back for more.Do you like fitness videos, or Wii? Invest in a good, well-positioned TV, and an equally good sound system, so you can play what will motivate you to keep exercising.

Have remote controls accessible for everything.

Then, what about that exercise gear? Experts recommend equipment that works muscles, heart rate, flexibility and mind.

With that in mind, here are five home-gym equipment must-haves:

STRENGTH-BUILDING You no longer need a cumbersome rack filled with different weights. "Selectorized" dumbbells can be weight-adjusted with just a click. Bowflex makes a popular version. Add an ab machine and bench press if you want to get serious

CARDIO AND HEART RATE Portable fitness options and small accessories can help you go the extra mile. Eric Herman, fitness category manager for Boston-based CSN, likes Stamina's elliptical trainer that's compact, lightweight, and stores easily under a desk or in a closet. They make folding treadmills and bikes, too. Tara likes the Bowflex/Nautilus Treadclimber. Gaiam has a fun mini-trampoline with a handle; it comes with a 35-minute workout DVD. And a few rounds in Wii Fit's hula-hoop activity are effective, too.

FLEXIBILITY AND BALANCE Resistance bands are an inexpensive, effective option for muscle toning. Balance balls work your core; Gaiam makes several. And for something different, consider Gaiam's T'ai Chi Fan Dance Kit; it includes a cloth fan and instructional DVD.

MIND Work mind and body at the same time with music or a favourite interactive video.

Invest in a good mat, one that doesn't have a strong odour, and think about the colour as well. Co-ordinate your equipment with the hues of your workout space.

Do you work best in a bright, energizing environment, or are you better in a calming, zen-like atmosphere? Hang some mirrors and motivational images to inspire you.

SAFETY A non-slip, cushioned surface underfoot is essential.

Give yourself enough space to extend your arms and legs without winging the vases off the tables. Position a phone nearby for emergencies. Prepare a portable first-aid box, with gel ice and Band-Aids. And make sure any moving equipment you buy has an auto-stop safeguard.

Dedicating a room with a full array of gym equipment and probably a new floor will run from $1,500 to more than $20,000.

While a simple gym can be set up in a three-by-three-and-a-half-metre extra room, many people will turn over half of a renovated basement — perhaps six-by-six metres — to a workout area.

"People may splurge on an elliptical or a treadmill, and then a year later, they'll add more equipment as they've proven to themselves that they're serious about working out," notes Herman.

Tara has done some large and elaborate home gyms, complete with remote lighting and sound, tilt-mounted TVs, climate control and a steam room. Fridges, ballet bars and colour-matched equipment are often added.

GAIAM/AP PHOTO

For a typical home, she advises putting the workout area "where you like to spend your time. Better to put it in a corner of the living room than in the bedroom — that's where you go to sleep."

She also advises against ordering a complicated, multi-component piece from an infomercial. "Eight cartons show up with 3,000 pieces you have to put together.

"Once assembled, they're often too big for the space, too complicated and noisy."

Try out equipment in fitness or sporting goods stores and read online reviews. If you're strapped for both cash and space, a mat, some weights and a couple of towels will do, says Tara.

"Just get yourself moving. You don't need all the gizmos. There are 24-hour fitness channels on TV. Invite a friend over. The goal's to stave off boredom so you keep exercising."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STAMINA/AP PHOTO

Shown: (above) Gaiam Core Advantage Stability Ball; (below) Stamina Folding Exercise Bike

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The roles of attraction

The J Spot

Josey Vogels

metronews.ca/thejspot

An online dating website that recently expelled 5,000 members, including 500 Canadians, because they no longer met the site's beauty standards has — not surprisingly — met with a lot of criticism.

Frankly, given the unapologetic and blatantly provocative response from the site's management, I think the whole thing reeked of a publicity stunt so I don't care give them any more free publicity by naming the site.

But, stunt or no stunt, it did raise the question about how honest we are when it comes to the importance of looks when it comes to meeting people.

While most guys in my own very unofficial survey admitted that looks matter, most at least tried to pretend that what attracts them physically to a woman went beyond the superficial, with several citing "a woman's eyes" as the first thing that draws them in. Hands came in a close second.

"They're lying," countered one of the many women I asked who cited "sense of humour" as what turned her crank. That's right, because looks are only more important to men. "Oh, and a developed upper body, of course," she added. Bingo.

Another male respondent pointed out that both eyes and a sense of humour are ridiculous answers. "What am I going to say? 'Man look at that woman across the street, great eyes, and what a funny hat, she must have a great sense of humour.'"

Okay, so maybe we're all lying to ourselves. Looks do matter. Still, when pressed, most people will tell you that, when it comes to attraction, looks might get your foot in the door, but if they don't like what greets them once they get inside, they're just as likely to turn around and walk back out.

As American First Lady Michelle Obama told Glamour magazine when they asked her for dating advice, "Cute's good," she said. "But cute only lasts for so long and then it's, 'Who are you as a person?'"

Michelle Obama

Ultimately, when it comes to lasting relationships, having similar morals, values, world views and goals in life play a way bigger role than physical attraction. In fact, given the importance of all this other stuff, physical attraction seems like a pretty misguided and unreliable starting point when it comes to finding a mate.

Maybe I should start should start my own exclusive dating site for the rest of us. What do you think? averagelookingpeoplwith lotsofothergreatstufftoofer.com?

No beautiful people allowed.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

Self-control is contagious

HEALTHY HABITS A series of U.S. studies has found that self-control is contagious. And so is lack of willpower. Thinking about someone with good self-control makes you more likely to resist temptation, according to researchers at the University of Georgia in Athens, GA. In these new studies, involving hundreds of volunteers, scientists found out why: those with good self-control influence others positively, and vice versa.

CELIA MILNE/METRO CANADA

ADVERTISING FEATURE

GIVE YOUR SKIN A FRESH START FOR THE NEW YEAR

A RESOLUTION THAT IS EASY TO KEEP

Lose 10 pounds, start a fitness routine, engage in volunteer work. Most of us use the new year as a chance to take stock of our lives and resolve to make changes in a variety of areas. Although we approach these changes with utmost sincerity, it's not always easy to keep up the momentum. But don't despair. Research has shown that it is easier to reach your goal if you have set it yourself. There are many changes that are within your control.

Take your skin for example. At this time of year, it's easy for it to feel unloved due to cold, dry outdoor air, artificial indoor heating and hot showers. The harsh conditions of Canadian winters can strip away the oils from the surface layer of skin. Once the surface layer is compromised, skin can no longer retain its moisture. As a result, skin on the face and body tends to be in worse condition during the winter months than at other times of the year.

But January is a great time to make a commitment to taking better care of the skin on your body. Luckily the majority of factors that lead to dry skin are external and controllable and with care and attention, they can be treated and prevented. This means protecting your outer layer from the elements and taking the time to exfoliate, cleanse and moisturize. If you stick to your routine, your body will reap the rewards.

Dry skin can appear anywhere on the body but hands, arms, lower legs, elbows, back, knees and abdomen are the most common areas. Often it feels like the skin is tightened or annoyingly itchy, but on some people, dry skin can be noticeable and very problematic. In extreme cases, dry skin can lead to inflammation of the skin which can manifest as redness, swelling, crusting, weeping, cracks and fissures. These open cracks and fissures may lead to skin infection.

> The New year is a great time to make a commitment to taking better care of the skin on your body

A RESOLUTION FOR SKIN CARE

Give your skin a fresh start by giving it the treatment it deserves with new **Olay Quench Advanced Relief Body Lotion.** Specifically formulated to help strengthen skin's moisture barrier over time, Quench Advanced Relief Body Lotion helps prevent dry skin from coming back helping to break the dry skin cycle. As well, Quench Advanced Relief provides moisture that lasts up to 24 hours, is dermatologist tested and clinically proven to moisturize and retain moisture for as long as five days after use. Formulated with ingredients that help combat dryness, including, VitaNiacin and Vitamin E, Quench Advanced Relief is non-greasy and fragrance-free.

New year, new you

Throw out those overwhelming, hard-to-follow resolutions and focus on goals that may be easier to achieve. Here are some easy-to-implement tips for making skin care a priority this year. Remember, a few minutes a day can make a world of difference in your skin's appearance!

1. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A SKIN CARE REGIMEN, START ONE

It's as easy as 1-2-3. Moisturize your body and face daily to help restore the natural oils and moisture in your skin. And always remember to clean your face to remove makeup, oil, daily grime and pollutants.

2. PROTECT YOUR SKIN FROM THE SUN

Applying a moisturizer with UV protection every morning is the most important step you can take to protect your skin. You may not see the results immediately but your skin will thank you in years to come.

3. ADD AN AT-HOME TREATMENT TO YOUR ROUTINE

At-home versions of treatments are growing in popularity. Try Olay Thermal Pedicure for your feet. Used twice or even once a month, at-home treatments can help to reveal younger-looking, fresher skin.

4. GIVE YOUR HANDS THE MOISTURE TREATMENT

Gloves or no gloves, hands can suffer from the harshness of the cold season. Relieve dry, winter hands with a good hand lotion.

OLAY®

Babies being born smaller, study

U.S. newborns are arriving a little smaller, says puzzling new Harvard research that can't explain why. The average birth weight of full-term babies is just under 7 1/2 pounds, a drop of about 1.8 ounces. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A new treatment for C. difficile

A new, double-barrelled approach to treating C. difficile appears to dramatically reduce recurrence of the debilitating and potentially deadly infection, preliminary testing suggests.

Researchers developed two drugs, called monoclonal antibodies, which are aimed at neutralizing two toxins produced by Clostridium difficile, a common bacterium that can infect the gastrointestinal tract and cause severe diarrhea in vulnerable patients.

A small study found that injections of the monoclonal antibodies along with specific antibiotics used to treat C. difficile reduced the recurrence of the disease by 72 per cent.

"We're really hopeful that this is a new therapy and a new option for patients," said Dr. Donna Ambrosino of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, which co-developed the drugs.

The study compared 200 patients with C. difficile in 30 centres across the United States and Canada, from July 2006 through April of 2008.

Half were randomly assigned to receive antibiotics plus a single injection of the monoclonal antibodies, while the other half were treated with antibiotics and a shot containing a placebo.

Patients were then monitored for almost three months.

The research, published in this week's New England Journal of Medicine, is what's called a Phase 2 study, conducted to determine safety of the drugs and optimal dosing.

But in analyzing their data, the researchers found a significant difference in how the two groups fared.

Results showed only seven per cent of patients who received the antibodies suffered a recurrence, compared to 25 per cent of those in the placebo group — a 72 per cent difference in the relapse rate.

"Results showed only seven per cent of patients who received the antibodies suffered a recurrence, compared to 25 per cent of those in the placebo group."

C. difficile is widespread in the environment, with up to five per cent of the population carrying it without ill effect.

But for some patients, taking certain antibiotics or other drugs can disrupt natural flora in the intestinal tract, allowing the bacterium to proliferate.

That can lead to severe diarrhea, bowel disease or potentially fatal blood poisoning.

A virulent epidemic strain, known as NAP-1, killed an estimated 2,000 patients in Quebec in the last 10 years, and other outbreaks of the bug caused scores of deaths in some Ontario hospitals.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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New breakfast option

Starting this week Tim Hortons adds English muffin breakfast sandwiches to its morning menu. To celebrate this introduction, participating restaurants are offering all hot breakfast sandwiches for a limited-time price of $1.99. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

Yogurt cheese cuts calories

Savvy dieters know the value of yogurt cheese. Made by straining yogurt until it's thick and spreadable, yogurt cheese offers the satisfaction of cream cheese without all the calories. Loblaws has built on this simple idea. Its new Blue Menu yogurt spreads are convenient. The spreads are launching in early February. Price: $2.50 for a 227-gram tub. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell

metronews.ca/liquidassets

A perfect start

Would you like something to drink while you look at the menu?

I used to hate that question, especially when it's served-up on my first visit to a restaurant. My waiter will let me spend as much intimate time as I want with the appetizer list, but always seems to think I know everything they've got behind the bar without looking.

I found the liquid answer on my first trip to Italy. Most Italians will start a fine meal with **Campari ($24.70 - $26.99)** — a bright red apéritif invented in Milan back in 1860. Made from a secret blend of 60 herbs, spices and neutral spirit, it's considered a bitter.

Though that bitterness becomes all too apparent if you drink it straight, mixing one ounce with two ounces of soda water (over ice) reveals Campari's palate cleansing properties. That combination makes for a great after dinner digestive as well. Substitute the soda with orange juice and you've got a perfect beverage for brunch.

Now just in case you don't think booze from the 19th century can't be hip in the new millennium; look for the close-up of a bottle of Campari early on in Lady Gaga's Lovegame video.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

Personal Gourmet recipe of the month — ROSE REISMAN

Rich, fresh flavour

Comfort without calories!

Rose Reisman's Potato Corn Chowder, above, and Tex Mex Chili, below.

Potato Corn Chowder

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

Traditional corn chowder is usually prepared with excess cream and butter. My version uses evaporated milk, and you'll be surprised at how creamy and rich the soup tastes. Charring the corn gives the soup a fresher flavor.

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups corn niblets (canned or fresh)
- 1½ tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1½ tsp finely chopped garlic
- ½ cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup peeled and diced potato
- 2½ cups chicken stock
- ½ tsp hot chili sauce (or finely chopped jalapeño pepper)
- 2 tsp all-purpose flour
- 1 cup canned evaporated milk (2%)

pinch of salt and pepper

- 3 Tbsp chopped parsley

METHOD:

1. Lightly coat a nonstick skillet with cooking spray and set over medium heat. Sauté the corn for about 8 minutes, stirring often or just until lightly browned. Purée half of the corn in a small food processor. Combine the puréed corn with the whole corn in a small bowl and set aside.
2. Add the oil to a large, nonstick pot and set over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for about 4 minutes. Add the red pepper and sauté for another 2 minutes. Add the potato, stock, chili sauce and corn mixture. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for about 15 minutes or until the potato is tender.
3. Whisk together the flour and milk in a small bowl and gradually add to the soup. Add the salt and pepper. Simmer, stirring occasionally for 3 minutes or until slightly thickened and heated through. Garnish with parsley.

Avoid awkward eye contact, not your RSPs.

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Tex Mex Chili

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES

This is a great, lighter chili typically served in the Southwest. Using chicken rather than beef reduces the calories and fat. Dusting the chicken with flour maintains the moisture. Aged cheddar is the perfect accompaniment. Add diced avocado to the list of garnishes if you like.

ERVES 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 oz skinless boneless chicken breasts (about 3 breasts), diced
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 cups chopped onion
- 1 cup canned corn, drained
- 2 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1 1/2 cups canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 1/2 cups tomato sauce (or store-bought spaghetti sauce)
- 3/4 cup chicken (or beef) stock
- 1 Tbsp chili powder
- 1 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 1/2 tsp seeded and finely chopped jalapeño pepper (or 1½ tsp hot chili sauce)

pinch of salt and pepper

- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro or parsley
- 1/2 cup shredded aged light cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup low-fat sour cream

METHOD:

1. Place the chicken and flour in a bowl and toss to coat. Lightly coat a nonstick saucepan with cooking spray, add 1 tsp of the vegetable oil and set over medium heat. Sauté the chicken for 5 minutes or until it is lightly browned on all sides, but do not cook through. Set aside.
2. Re-spray the same saucepan, add the remaining vegetable oil and set over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until soft, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Stir in the corn and garlic and continue to cook and stir for 5 minutes or until the corn is browned.
3. Stir in the beans, tomato sauce, stock, chili powder, basil, oregano, jalapeño, salt and pepper.
4. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and cover. Simmer for 15 minutes. Add the diced chicken and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes or until the chicken is just cooked through and the chili thickens. Serve the chili in bowls, and garnish with cilantro, cheese and sour cream.

About Rose

Rose Reisman is an author, media personality, nutritionist, and the inspiration behind a fresh food delivery service, Personal Gourmet, and new website, The Art of Living Well. Visit Rose at rosereisman.com & personalgourmet.ca

Keef quits drinking

Keith Richards has given up alcohol. The Rolling Stones guitarist — who is known for his hellraising lifestyle — hasn't downed a drink in four months, despite previously claiming he would never become teetotal. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

Johnny's alive

Johnny Depp's rep was forced to confirm that the Pirates of the Caribbean star is alive and well after a rumour swept Twitter over the weekend claiming Depp had died in a car crash in France. METRO WORLD NEWS

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Prop 8 doc protest-free

No Mormon opposition at Sundance screening

Despite rumoured anti-gay protests, a Sundance Film Festival documentary about the Mormon church's role in a 2008 California political battle over gay marriage played to a friendly audience on Sunday in Park City.

Only about two dozen gay marriage activists chanted — "Separate, church from 8" — in a parking lot outside the premiere of 8: The Mormon Proposition.

Directors Steven Greenstreet, left, and Reed Cowan have brought their documentary 8: The Mormon Proposition to the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

Sundance Film Festival

The film by Reed Cowan, a former Utah Mormon, contends that the locally based Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the driving force behind Proposition 8.

The ballot initiative reversed an earlier court decision that legalized gay marriage. Before the screening, festival director John Cooper had said he expected a small, but loud, group of "haters," might picket the film, but doubted that Mormon church members would be among them.

"It's not really the Mormon style," said Cooper, who is gay and married his partner of 20 years last year during the window between the court ruling and election day.

A Utah-based anti-gay equality group, America Forever, sent out 80,000 faxes on Friday denouncing the movie, its makers and the festival on Friday. Internet chatter among other anti-gay groups had also hinted they might come to Sundance, activist Eric Ethington said.

Mormon church officials have consistently called for a polite, respectful dialogue on the issue.

The church has actively fought marriage equality legislation across the U.S. since the early 1990s.

The movie made one moviegoer — Carolyne Simpson of San Diego — want to engage in a productive dialogue. Simpson, who isn't Mormon, said she supports gay marriage.

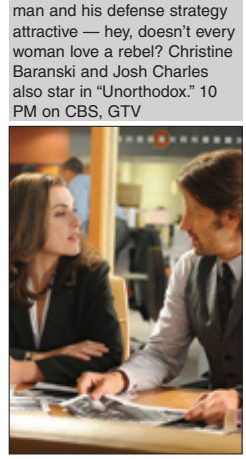
"What I come away with is that it might be interesting to go down and sit at the Mormon church and engage in a dialogue, and say, 'Tell me what you believe and here's what I believe,'" the 65-year-old said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 1/26/10	251	308	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Rick Mercer	22 Minutes (N)	Kids in-Hall	Comedy	CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	254	-	OMNI	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		The Simpsons
	250	321	CTV	etalk (CC)	Access H.	American Idol (N) (CC)		Lost "The Incident" (CC)				CTV News
	-	-	JOY	Frasier (CC)	The Insider	Islam 101 (CC)		Enigma (CC)		P3	Ek Noor	New Day
	252	336	GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	NCIS "Jet Lag" (N) (CC)		NCIS: Los Angeles "Missing"		The Good Wife "Unorthodox"		News
	256	389	VI	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N) (CC)	Independence Day ★★★ (1996) Will Smith. Earthlings vs. evil aliens in 15-mile-wide ships.						A News (N)
	253	359	CITY	The Office	The Office	The Biggest Loser Lifting competition. (N) (CC)				The Jay Leno Show (N) (CC)		EP Daily
	-	-	CW	The Office	The Office	90210 "Unmasked" (CC)		Melrose Place "Windsor"		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	NCIS "Jet Lag" (N) (CC)		NCIS: Los Angeles "Missing"		The Good Wife "Unorthodox"		KIRO 7 News
	287	379	NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	The Biggest Loser Lifting competition. (N) (CC)				The Jay Leno Show (N) (CC)		KING 5 News
	602	568	W	Supernanny "Keilen Family"		Dine With Me	Grocery Bag	Beauty Call	Style by Jury	How to Look Good Naked		Beauty Call
	288	380	ABC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Scrubs (N)	Better Off Ted	Lost "The Incident" (CC)				KOMO 4 News
	-	-	KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	13 Going on 30 ★★★ (2004) Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo.				Seinfeld	King	Cheers (CC)
	291	383	PBS	Life (Part 2)	Steves Europe	Nova (CC) (DVS)		Frontline "The Card Game"		Independent Lens (PA)		Afropop
	290	382	FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	American Idol (N) (CC)		Human Target (N) (CC)		Q13 FOX News at Ten (N)		Family Guy
	-	364	PBS	Frontline "The Card Game"		Foot in Grave	You've Gone	Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		Nova (CC) (DVS)	
	296	654	SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	The Office	Name Is Earl	South Park	Half & Half	Paid Program	Street Court	Cold Files
	298	653	TLA	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	90210 "Unmasked" (CC)		Melrose Place "Windsor"		KTLA 5 News at 10 (N) (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	WGN	WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Family Guy	Two/Half Men	According/Jim	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Maury (CC)	
	297	652	WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	According/Jim	Family Guy	South Park	Scrubs (CC)
	199	311	STR	CTV News	NTV Latenight News		Late Show W/Letterman		Late Late Show/Ferguson		Inside Edition	Seinfeld
news	502	390	NW	CBC News: the fifth estate		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	RSP	MMA Conn	Hockey	Hockey	Canucks TV	Saturday Night Poker		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	TSN	(6:30) NHL Hockey Chicago Blackhawks at Edmonton Oilers.				SportsCentre	Strongest Man	Strongest Man	Hockey	SportsCentre
	411	457	OLN	Ghost Hunters (CC)		Destination Truth (CC)		Operate-Repo	Operate-Repo	Ghost Hunters (CC)		Ghost Hunters
	410	403	SCR	(5:00) Court Surfing		Score Now		Score Now		Score Now		Final Score
	417	406	SC	Dangerous Drives		Pass Time	NASCAR Hub	Monster Jam		Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Drives
	416	409	GLF	Fútbol Uruguayo		MLS Weekly	Gol TV News	Toronto-Today	MLS Weekly	Paid Program	Gol TV News	Gol TV News
family	552	543	YTV	iCarly (CC)	Fries That?	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	To Be Indie	Prank Patrol
	555	545	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Chicken
	557	541	FAM	Sonny Chance	Suite Life	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
	553	546	TRE	Babar (CC)	Zigby	Max & Ruby	Dragon	Backyard	Ni Hao	Go, Diego, Go!	(:35) Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	KNO	Frontiers of Construction		Russia: Journey		Hear and Now (2007) Premiere. (CC)			Recreat. Eden	Dyslexia
	575	583	CMT	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Shaye: This Is It		Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba (CC)	Reba (CC)	According/Jim
	570	580	MM	disBAND	Love Court	MuchOnDemand (CC)		Pimp My Ride	My Own	disBAND	Video on Trial	Spotlight
	600	564	H&G	House	House	Holmes on Homes (CC)		Million Dollar Listing (CC)		Bang, Buck	Genevieve	House
	615	520	A&E	Paranormal	Paranormal	Psychic	Paranormal	(:01) Criminal Minds (CC)		Psychic Kids: Paranormal		Paranormal
	628	584	SPKE	(:06) Pros vs. Joes		Entourage	Entourage	(:12) Pros vs. Joes		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		Mysteries
	521	560	TLC	Little Couple	Little Couple	Cake Boss	Cake Boss	18 Kids and Counting (CC)		Little Couple	Little Couple	Little Couple
	616	522	SHO	Relic Hunter (CC)		Making Mr. Right (2008) Dean Cain, Christina Cox. (CC)				Drop Dead Diva (N) (CC)		NCIS "Bait"
	620	523	BVO	Diana Krall	Kaeshammer	Law & Order "Bad Faith"		Without a Trace (CC)		The Tao of Steve ★★★ (2000) Donal Logue.		
	601	562	SLC	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	ET Canada	What	Real Housewives-Atlanta		Real Housewives OC		Runway
	520	505	DIS	License to Drill "Paydirt" (N)		Daily Planet (CC)		Destroyed	Destroyed	License to Drill "Paydirt"		How It's Made
	522	506	HIS	Ancient Discoveries (CC)		Cities of the Underworld		Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	Ancients Behaving Badly		Crime Stories
	627	528	SPC	Fringe "What Lies Below" (N)		InnerSpace	Stargate SG-1 (CC)		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Lost "Some Like It Hoth"	
	294	650	TBS	The Office	The Office	Lopez Tonight (N)		Name Is Earl	Name Is Earl	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Lopez Tonight
	619	525	TROP	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Rescue Ink "House of Horror"		Dog Whisperer (CC)		End of Leash	Bootcamp	Tube Tales
	603	561	FN	Good Eats	Good Eats	Restaurant Makeover (CC)		Diner, Drive-In	Unwrapped	The F Word (CC)		Good Eats
	-	-	AMC	(5:00) Spy Game ★★ (2001)		The Big Red One ★★★ (1980, War) Lee Marvin, Mark Hamill. (CC)					(:45) Sky Riders ★★★ (1976)	
	626	547	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Jeff Dunham	Blue Collar TV	Daily Show
	320	621	CEN	(6:20) How She Move ★★★		The Bourne Ultimatum ★★★ (2007) Matt Damon. (CC)				Shoot 'Em Up ★★ (2007) Clive Owen. (CC)		
	581	566	MTV	Teen Mom (Season Finale) (N) (CC)			After	Jersey Shore (CC)		Teen Mom (CC)		
	261	394	V	Unscripted (N)	Benmergui-Isr	Poltergeist: The Legacy		The Black Stallion ★★★ (1979, Adventure) Kelly Reno, Mickey Rooney. (CC)				
	-	-	MUL	Sewing Maid	Immortal	Il Caffe		In Germany	Euromaxx	Schauplatz	Euro. Journal	Patrol World

critics'corner

The Good Wife

Alicia (Julianna Margulies) is representing the daughter of one of the partners in the firm, and her co-counsel on the case, Ryan Alprin (Chris Bowers, "Rescue Me"), is taking an unusual approach to the defense. Alicia finds both the man and his defense strategy attractive — hey, doesn't every woman love a rebel? Christine Baranski and Josh Charles also star in "Unorthodox." 10 PM on CBS, GTV



Drop Dead Diva

Jane (Brooke Elliott) defends Deb's mother in a divorce, while Grayson (Jackson Hurst) represents her father. Kim (Kate Levering) represents a dog owner who sues a pet cloning company, claiming the clone is not the same dog as his first pup, a Westminster champion. Sharon Lawrence, Mark Moses and Diedrich Bader guest star in the new episode "The Chinese Wall." 10 PM on SHO

U.S. in denial about JFK killing: Stone

CONSPIRACY THEORY

Hollywood filmmaker Oliver Stone said yesterday the United States remains in denial over the possibility that someone other than Lee Harvey Oswald could have assassinated John F. Kennedy, calling it a "national fairy tale."

Speaking to 300 high school students in the Thai capital, Bangkok, Stone said exploring alternative theories over the JFK assassination remains too sensitive for those in the media or academia.

"To this day, many key Americans in power are in total denial about this story," Stone said.

"They don't even want to know about the possibility that he was killed by someone other than Lee Harvey Oswald. It is a national fairy tale."

Stone was in Bangkok to talk about filmmaking and peace as part of a series of talks facilitated by the Vienna-based International Peace Foundation.

His 1991 film JFK, which he acknowledged was his most controversial, ridicules the Warren Commission conclusion that Oswald acted alone and suggests a massive conspiracy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The new face of Lancome

Julia Roberts is the new face of Lancome. The Duplicity actress is thrilled to have landed the slot in the luxury beauty brand's advert and admits fronting the skincare line has been a long-running "dream" of hers. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Producer Timbaland says "I Love Nickelback."

Music hitmakes defend Nickelback

Hip-hop and R&B producer Timbaland has joined a small group of music hitmakers who have publicly pledged support for one of the world's most-maligned bands, Nickelback.

Coldplay's Chris Martin raised some eyebrows during an interview in 2008 when he said he had "nothing but respect" for the Canadian band and added, "I think they're great."

Now Timbaland has praised the band that so many music fans have condemned.

Despite Nickelback's stellar track record of CD sales, and a recent "band of the 2000s" honour bestowed by Billboard magazine, the group continues to get little respect from critics and music aficionados.

But when Timbaland — whose real name is Timothy Mosley — drew up a short list of artists he wanted to work with on his latest album, Shock Value II, he thought of Nickelback frontman Chad Kroeger.

The album also includes collaborations with fellow Canadians Drake and Nelly Furtado and other music superstars including Justin Timberlake and Miley Cyrus.

Timbaland sought out Kroeger for the track Tomorrow in the Bottle and got a "very easy" yes, he said.

"I just love Nickelback's music," he said. "That's why I reached out to Chad."

As for working with Drake, Timbaland said he sent the young rapper a track based on "his voice, his tone."

"It just sounded like his type of style," Timbaland said of the music behind "Say Something," which Timbaland also raps on.

Timbaland said it's hard to pinpoint exactly how Drake became one of the biggest stars in hip hop so quickly, based on the strength of just a few mixtapes and no major-label albums.

"Everything is timing, maybe it was the right timing, he popped up at the right time," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Crazy ideas drive OK GO

Los Angeles band combines soul, R&B, rock and pop

BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
for Metro Canada

When OK GO uploaded a now wildly popular video (49 million and counting) for Here It Goes Again three-and-a-half years ago, they had no idea how popular it would become. "It's weird," says frontman Damian Kulash, still sounding a bit surprised by the popularity of his treadmill-dancing clip.

The Los Angeles-based foursome didn't set out to create one of the most talked about videos of the last decade, in fact, they don't consider their music video a video at all.

"Music videos used to be commercials for rock bands and labels who were trying to sell stuff," says Kulash. "Now that MTV is largely not playing videos, there's no reason to think of the music video as we used to."

Of the Blue Colour of the Sky is a latest album from OK GO.

For OK GO, making videos is "an opportunity to create the craziest ideas" says Kulash, something they can't do in a more ridged recording environment. It also gives them the chance to play with the tunes. Unlike most videos, the band doesn't necessarily perform to its original track. In the YouTube clip for This Too Shall Pass, a tune off the group's new album Of The Blue Colour Of The Sky, the band incorporates an entire marching band and singing children — that's not on the CD version of the song.

"Why does a music video have to look like a car commercial," asks Kulash. "Why should it even be the same length as the song?"

Kulash says making his videos — most of which are even more creative and entertaining than Here It Goes Again — is when he can be at his most creatively ambitious. And while they do have to get financing for some of the videos ("not all can be for $5," he says) for the most part the band is able to do what they want.

But, judging from the recent disc, there aren't many restrictions on what they can record either. The group's third record is an ambitious combination of soul, R&B, rock and pop — on opener WTF Kulash does a pretty good Prince impression. It's a departure for the usually rock heavy group, but after years of touring with their amps turned up, it's hard to blame them for wanting a change.

"Whatever engines we had in that direction burned out a bit," Kulash explains. "I tried going into the garage and turning up my amps and impressing myself with a catharsis of volume, but it just wasn't there."

Kulash grew up listening to a lot of R&B and Prince, so when the rock 'n' roll dried up, he turned to his other favourite genres for inspiration. "I got back to my influences that were older and deeper," he says.

And that's reinvigorated the band, says the singer. "It's more alive for us because it doesn't feel like we're beating out songs again."

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DVD picks

Michael Jackson's This Is It

Director: Kenny Ortega
Michael Jackson

DOES THE UNUSUAL documentary concert movie This is It have anything to offer folks who aren't confirmed fans of Wacko Jacko? Can anything of real value be expected from the filmed record of rehearsals for Michael Jackson's concert series that had been scheduled to begin last July at London's O2 Arena?

Yes and yes.

MJ fans will love the swirling, fast-cut images of Jackson performing his greatest hits in energetic — even athletic — style. Beat It, Billie Jean and Thriller are given the full production treatment. There is also plenty of time devoted to Wanna Be Startin' Somethin' and Smooth Criminal.

But anyone curious about the man himself — and who isn't? — and the state of his mind and body before his untimely death from heart failure at age 50, will find lots of interest in This is It.

Kenny Ortega, Jackson's longtime collaborator and creative director, shows us an MJ we haven't seen before. It's Michael Jackson unvarnished, the wizard behind the curtain and the man-child in the mirror, and it's fascinating to behold. He's as tough as Frank Sinatra with his perfectionistic demands, brooking no dissent as he puts dancers and musicians half his age through their gruelling paces. But he's also as fragile as Judy Garland, as is evident on the moving ballad Human Nature.

The film was culled from more than 100 hours of high-definition rehearsal footage, shot from March 2009 up to the hours before Jackson died on June 25, and lensed mainly at the The Forum and Staples Center in Los Angeles, where Jackson had been putting in full days of work for weeks.

This Is It delivers an emotional wallop; there's an undeniable sadness seeing it and knowing it's the show he never gave and never will.

Extras include expanded Thriller and Smooth Criminal rehearsals and several making-of and Jackson remembrance featurettes.

Peter Howell/for Metro Canada

On the web

Also on DVD:

- Read Metro's review of Surrogates at metronews.ca/movies

Talk about a sweet 16

For his 16th birthday, Diddy gave his son Justin Dior Combs a brand-new silver Maybach (price tag: $360,000 US). The teen received the wheels on Saturday night, people.com reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

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Split rumours persist

JUST GET IT OVER WITH ALREADY Though their reps continue to deny the story, details continue to emerge on the alleged separation of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.

"It's no secret they have been in a pretty loveless relationship for about a year," a source tells the Sun. "They barely spend time together, and when they do it is very fraught. They want different things from life."

The source claims that it was Pitt's brother Doug who convinced him to pull the plug on the relationship after a particularly chilly holiday season. On Sunday, the News of the World newspaper claimed Brad, 46, and 34-year-old Angelina had visited divorce lawyers to help them separate and planned to split up in the near future.

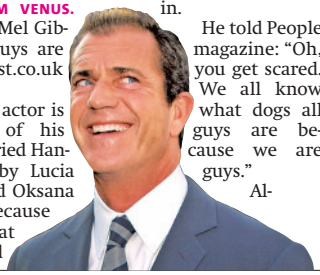
The legal document they allegedly signed will see their $330 million US fortune halved in two.

METRO WORLD NEWS

All guys are dogs: Mel

MEN ARE FROM MARS. WOMAN ARE FROM VENUS. GIBSON IS FROM ... Mel Gibson thinks "all guys are dogs," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 54-year-old actor is very protective of his daughters — married Hannah, 29, and baby Lucia with his girlfriend Oksana Grigorieva — because he knows what men are like and what they are interested in.



He told People magazine: "Oh, you get scared. We all know what dogs all guys are because we are guys."

Although Gibson is distrustful of any man's intentions for his girls, the actor acknowledges that women are far smarter than guys give them credit for.

"We shouldn't despair, the truth is all women are smarter than men."

The Hollywood star is a very protective father and partner and last week revealed he keeps a gun in his house. METRO WORLD NEWS

Follow these celebrities on Twitter...

CelebTweets

Taylor Swift can only exercise under certain conditions, Jonathan Ross isn't worried about what you think of him and Tila Tequila finally gets the recognition she deserves.

@wossy Just went for a lovely swim, listening to soundtrack from #GLEE. If that makes me seem less robustly masculine then that is your problem.

@officialTila When I'm SO excited! They are naming a Milkshake after me at "Millions of Milkshakes" this thursday in Hollywood! Everyone come! What an honor!

@taylorswift13 The hardest part about motivating myself to run is finding matching socks.

METRO WORLD NEWS

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Cancun	from $215 + taxes & fees $280
San Francisco	from $249 + taxes & fees $110
Honolulu	from $348 + taxes & fees $102
Jamaica	from $396 + taxes & fees $264
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Valentine's Vacations

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Victoria Valentine's Day Weekend Fairmont, 2 Nights from $149‡ taxes & fees included
INCLUDES accom at the famous Fairmont Empress. ADD Victoria city tour from $32.

Tofino Valentine's Day Weekend 2 Nights from $269‡ taxes & fees included
INCLUDES beachfront suite accom.

Lake Louise Valentine's Day Weekend Fairmont, 2 Nights from $359‡ taxes & fees included
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Seattle Valentine's Day Weekend Air + 2 Nights 4-Star from $399 + $101 taxes & fees
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Santo Domingo 7 Nights 4-Star	from $792 + taxes & fees $311
Panama 7 Nights 4-Star	from $797 + taxes & fees $234
Varadero 7 Nights 4-Star	from $805 + taxes & fees $206
Mayan Riviera 7 Nights 4-Star	from $847 + taxes & fees $264

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Today Partly cloudy 9° / 3°
Wednesday Variable 7° / 4°
Thursday Partly sunny 7° / 5°
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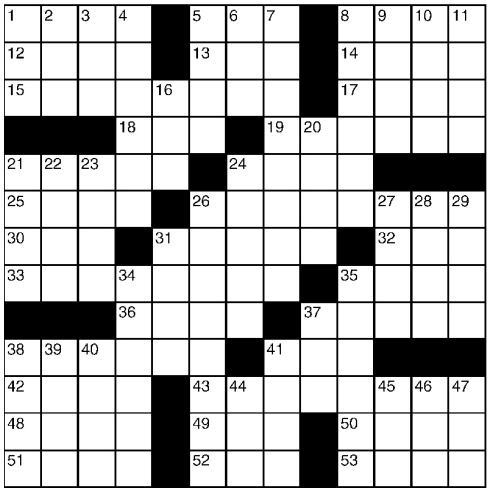
For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: **metronews.ca/food**

Take Five



ACROSS

1 Snowbank creator
5 Blond shade
8 Recedes
12 Helper
13 Extinct bird
14 — contendere
15 Cleared out, as by hoeing
17 Let fall
18 Pester for payment
19 Turn white
21 Let off the hook?
24 Authentic
25 . ."Wind in the Willows" character
26 Like some grapes
30 Pismire
31 Dazzles
32 Luau offering
33 Unthink-ing
35 Sturdy fabric
36 Mature
37 Retains
38 Shoddily made
41 Torched
42 Bread unit
43 Unnecessary
48 Vote off the island
49 — Jima
50 Vicinity
51 Quarry
52 Coffee break hour
53 Black plus white

DOWN

1 Dog's foot
2 Recline
3 Praise in verse
4 Joined as one
5 "So be it"
6 "Mayday!"
7 They're washed-up
8 Ultimate goal
9 "— Free"
10 United nations
11 Frosh who graduated
16 Drag along
20 Young fellows
21 Hexagonal state
22 Zilch
23 — de foie gras
24 Don't just toss
26 "Hurry!"
27 Duel tool
28 Daytime TV entry
29 Sermonizers' subjects
31 Misstep
34 In need of caulking, maybe
35 Flier's awkward feeling
37 Tease
38 Hoofbeat sound
39 Session with a shrink
40 Facility
41 Ponce de —
44 Ram's mate
45 Blunder
46 Vast expanse
47 Put into words

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	7		1			5	9	
1				9		8		7
8				3				
	5	3			4		6	
				2				
	2		3			7	4	
				5				3
6		7		4				8
	1	4			3		2	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

3	9	1	8	6	4	5	2	7
4	7	6	9	5	2	3	1	8
5	8	2	7	3	1	4	6	9
8	6	4	3	7	9	2	5	1
1	3	5	6	2	8	7	9	4
7	2	9	4	1	5	8	3	6
6	4	3	2	9	7	1	8	5
2	1	7	5	8	6	9	4	3
9	5	8	1	4	3	6	7	2

On the web

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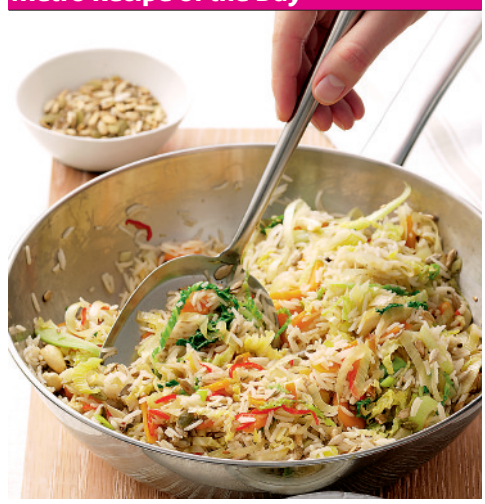
Metro Recipe of the Day



Glorious Vegetable and Cashew Stir Fry

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/3 cups (325 mL) basmati rice, rinsed
2 tbsp (25 mL) soy sauce
1 tbsp (15 mL) dry sherry
2 tsp (10 mL) toasted sesame oil
2 tbsp (25 mL) canola oil
7 1/2 oz (220 g) carrots, peeled, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
2/3 lb (300 g) leeks, thinly sliced
5 oz (150 g) Savoy cabbage, thinly sliced
1 large garlic clove, crushed
1 large fresh red chili pepper, seeded and sliced
4 tbsp (60 mL) cashews
4 tbsp (60 mL) mixed toasted seeds

METHOD:

1. Add rice to pot of boiling water and boil 10 minutes or until grains are tender. Drain. Meanwhile, mix soy sauce, sherry and sesame oil in small bowl and set aside.
2. While rice is cooking, heat wok with canola oil and stir-fry carrots and leeks 2-3 minutes or until softened. Add cabbage, garlic and chili pepper, and stir-fry 2-3 minutes. Stir in soy sauce mixture and cashews. Season to taste.
3. Mix hot rice into wok or pan. Sprinkle with seeds and fork through.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
You will have to hold a friend's hand and walk them through a situation they do not feel comfortable with.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Keep your thoughts to yourself today, especially if you have to deal with people whose friendship you are not entirely sure of.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Others will heap all sorts of extra duties and responsibilities on your shoulders if you let them. So don't let them.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
You may not know why you have reached a certain conclusion but if your inner voice tells you it is right you must not ignore it.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
If someone lets you down over the next 24 hours your best course of action by far is to forgive them. This is no time to hold grudges.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You may have a dozen or more things on the go right now but you thrive when the pressure is on. Know when, and how, to say No.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Try not to get annoyed with people whose assistance you may need in the very near future. You need allies, not enemies.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
With Mars, planet of aggression, moving through the career area of your chart at the moment you will find it easy to defend your interests.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Some people will go out of their way to gain an advantage at your expense today, but only if they think you have let down your guard.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
Someone is angry with you today, and you honestly don't have the faintest idea why. Don't make matters worse by getting angry too.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Someone is counting on you to ride to their rescue and, of course, you will do what you can to help them. But who will rescue you?

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Don't waste a lot of time and energy today trying to explain to people why you are taking a certain course of action — just get on with it.

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Jan. 29 • 1 wk.

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+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $212

MEXICO

Puerto Vallarta
Golden Crown
Paradise • 4 1/2★
All-Inclusive • Oceanview rm.
Mar. 6 – 20 • 1 wk.

$1299
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $263

JAMAICA

Gran Bahia Principe
Jamaica • 4 1/2★
All-Inclusive
Junior suite
Feb. 5, 12, 19 & 26 • 1 wk.

PRIVILEGES

$1299
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $264

DEAL on CRUISES

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Carnival Victory
Southern Caribbean Cruise
Flights to San Juan via Toronto
Inside stateroom, cat. 4A
Mar. 28 • 1 wk.

$1539
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $276

Celebrity Cruises[2]
Celebrity Summit[SM]
Southern Caribbean Cruise
Flights to San Juan
Oceanview stateroom, cat. 07
Mar. 20 • 1 wk.

$1569
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $278

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Paris via Montreal
Hotel Ibis London
Earls Court • 3★
Breakfast • Standard rm.
Mar. 18 • 3 nts.

$899
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $405

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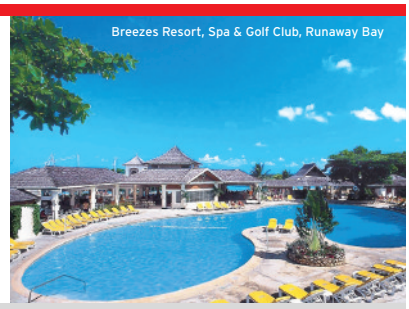
JAMAICA

Breezes Resort, Spa & Golf Club, Runaway Bay • 4★
Super-Inclusive
Deluxe rm.
Mar. 5 • 1 wk.

$1699
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $264

Hedonism III • 3 1/2★
Super-Inclusive
Pool view rm.
Mar. 12, 19 & 26 • 1 wk.

$1799
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $264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Departure taxes are extra and must be paid locally: Costa Rica, 26 USD cash; Cuba, 25 CUC cash. Prices in this ad are in Canadian dollars and are valid for bookings made between Jan. 26 & 30, 2010, inclusive, unless otherwise stated. Prices are per person based on double occupancy, unless otherwise stated, from Vancouver International Airport. Air & Hotel packages to the Caribbean, Cuba, Costa Rica and Mexico include return flight, the hotel as described and transfers at destination. Air & Cruise vacations include return flight and the cruise as described. Vacations to Europe and the USA include return flight and hotel as described. New bookings only. Subject to availability. Not applicable to group bookings. Sale prices reflect applicable reductions, are subject to change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion. Flights operated by Air Canada. For applicable terms and conditions, consult the Air Canada Vacations brochures or www.aircanadavacations.com. BC registration #32229. †Aeroplan Miles are not actual miles, but points towards rewards including travel rewards. Unless otherwise indicated, Aeroplan Miles indicated are based on roundtrip Economy class per passenger from Vancouver to Paris via Montreal, are awarded on flight-inclusive travel only, and are per Aeroplan member. For the amount of Aeroplan Miles that can be earned when flying to other destinations, visit www.aircanadavacations.com. For terms and conditions of the Aeroplan program, consult www.aeroplan.com. ■ [1]Carnival Cruise Lines ships' registry: The Bahamas and Panama. [2]Celebrity Cruises Inc. ships' registry: The Bahamas and Ecuador. [3]Air & Hotel packages of three nights or more to London and Paris only. [4]Available in conjunction with flight-inclusive packages. Non-stop flights via Vancouver. Excluding USA & Europe destinations. ■ ®Aeroplan is a registered trademark of Aeroplan Canada Inc. ®Air Canada Vacations is a registered trademark of Air Canada, used under license by Touram Limited Partnership. Visit www.aircanadavacations.com for up-to-date information.

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